

DOCTORAL THESIS

An exploration of the development of the Ofsted criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching in mainstream schools and how the criteria are perceived and used by primary school headteachers and teachers

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An exploration of the development of the Ofsted
criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching in
mainstream schools and how the criteria are
perceived and used by primary school
headteachers and teachers

By

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Abstract

This thesis was inspired by my over 20 years' experience of inspecting schools, including as one of Her Majesty's Inspectors from 1991 to 2000. The research's main aims were to review the development of the criteria devised by Ofsted by which inspectors judge the quality of teaching in mainstream schools and to gain primary headteachers' and teachers' views on the criteria and their enactment. The thesis analyses the development of the criteria since the first Ofsted inspections in 1993, and considers possible influences of government policies and educational research. I interviewed three former and one current HMI to explore their perspectives about the development of the criteria, and ten primary headteachers and pairs of teachers from their schools to hear their views. I applied Bourdieu's thinking tools of habitus and field to interpret the roles of the different actors involved in the preparation and enactment of the teaching criteria. The findings suggest a hierarchy in what I have called the 'field of inspection', with HMI wielding significant symbolic capital because of their role as authors of the criteria and overseers of quality. Since 2012, the combination of a new HMCI and government has thrown the quality of teaching into the limelight, raised the stakes of the Ofsted outcome for schools and resulted in much public criticism of Ofsted inspections. Ofsted has responded to criticism over the years resulting in frequent changes to the inspection guidance and criteria, but the language of the criteria remains imprecise and open to interpretation. The thesis concludes that the frequent changes reflect what Bourdieu called 'misrecognition' by Ofsted of the significance of the inspection outcome to schools and the lengths that headteachers and teachers are prepared to go to get a 'good Ofsted outcome'.

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Glossary of terms and abbreviations

Additional inspector (AI)	These are persons with an education background who undertake Ofsted inspections on contract to an ISP. They are not full time Ofsted employees.
ATL	Association of teachers and lecturers
CfBT	One of the inspection service providers for Ofsted (formerly called Centre for British Teachers).
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality
Data Dashboard	Ofsted online summary of a school's results data over a three year period and comparisons to other schools or providers.
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DES	Department of Education and Science
DfE	Department for Education
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ECM	Every Child Matters
EF	Evidence forms used by inspectors to record all of the evidence collected during an inspection (for example, lesson observations, meetings, scrutiny of pupils' work and school information). Most EFs are hand-written.
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EYFS	Early years foundation stage
GTP	Graduate Teacher Programme
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector (of schools)
HOC	House of Commons
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
ISP	Inspection service provider (for example, Tribal, SERCO and CfBT) that organise inspections and deploy additional inspectors on behalf of Ofsted. Their contracts to inspect

mainstream schools ceased after August 2015.

LA	Local Authority
LEA	Local Education Authority
LGA	Local Government Association
LSA	Learning support assistant
Middle leader	Teacher with middle management responsibility, such as a subject or phase (such as EYFS).
NAACE	National Association of Advisers for Computers in Education
NAHT	National Association of Headteachers
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NCTL	National College for Teaching and Leadership
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headship
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
NUT	National Union of Teachers
OHMCI	Office of HMCI (known as Ofsted)
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education. Since 2007, known as the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills.
Ofsted inspectors (OIs)	From September 2015, educators, including former additional inspectors (see above), who successfully passed a number of assessments will inspect on contract directly with Ofsted, rather than through ISPs.
Ofstin	Office for standards in inspection – an anti-Ofsted group set up by a group of academics in the early days of Ofsted.
PANDA	Performance and Assessment Data (precursor to RAISEonline but still used for sixth form data)
PICSI	Pre-Inspection Context and School Indicators (precursor to the PANDA)
PISA	Programme for international school assessment
PTA	Parent Teacher Association

Pupil premium	The extra government funds given to schools for each pupil who is eligible for free school meals, or has been eligible in the past six years, or who is looked after by the local authority, or who has a parent in one of the armed forces. The pupil premium was introduced in England by the Coalition Government in 2011. Eligible pupils are referred to by Ofsted as 'disadvantaged' (since 2014).
RAISEonline	Raising achievement through self-evaluation
RI	Requires improvement (replaced 'satisfactory' grade in 2012).
SATs	Standard Assessment Tasks/Tests
SCI	Senior Chief Inspector: name of the Chief Inspector (HMI) prior to Ofsted
SDP	School Development Plan/ning
SEF	Self-evaluation form
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities
SERCO	Service Corporation. One of the inspection service providers for Ofsted.
SEU	Standards and Effectiveness Unit
SIP	School Improvement Partner
SMSC	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. It has been a requirement in each Ofsted framework that inspectors report on the quality of provision for pupils' SMSC development.
TA	Teaching Assistant
TES	Times Educational Supplement
Tribal	One of the inspection service providers for Ofsted.
Watchsted	Website that provides information about the latest Ofsted inspection results over the country, www.watchsted.com .

Chapter 1 Introduction

The criteria by which inspectors evaluate the quality of teaching are hugely influential. As a former HMI and more recently an additional inspector¹, I have lived through and applied many incarnations of the teaching criteria from the first in 1993 until the most recent for September 2015. I have also witnessed, in my role as adviser to a number of schools, the impact of inspections on schools and how headteachers use the teaching criteria in their own practice. I feel that I have viewed the criteria from three perspectives – as an insider (HMI); outsider (additional inspector) and recipient (the school). It was these experiences that led me to want to undertake this research by exploring the development of the criteria, and how they are perceived and enacted by schools. I decided to focus on primary schools because of my recent experience as a London Challenge primary adviser, helping to support a number of primary schools around London.

The teaching criteria set the standard by which inspectors judge the quality of teaching in a school. The inspection teams draw on their teaching judgement to arrive at an evaluation of the overall effectiveness of a school (for example, Ofsted, 2012b: 22-26; 2014a: 33- 38). If the quality of teaching is judged inadequate, then the school's overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate² and the school will go into special measures (defined as 'failing' in the Education Schools Act 1992, DES, 1992, and in the Education and Inspections Act 2006, DfES, 2006:48) or said to have 'serious weaknesses'. The consequences of a school failing are very significant, not least for the headteacher who will possibly resign or be dismissed (Lepkowska, 2014; ATL, 2013). The Education Act 2011 (DfE, 2011c) gave the Secretary of State the power to direct local authorities to close schools that are in special measures. This act also set out how schools 'eligible for intervention' (as defined in part 4 of the Education Act 2006, DfES, 2006:212) can be converted into a sponsored academy (DfE, 2011c:55). The Ofsted annual report for 2013-2014

¹ An additional inspector is a person that undertakes Ofsted inspections through an inspection service provider. Since 2015, inspections have been organised directly by Ofsted and additional inspectors are called 'Ofsted inspectors', as distinguished from HMI who are employed by Ofsted directly.

² There are currently four inspection grades: outstanding; good; requires improvement and inadequate.

(Ofsted, 2014h: 7-9) includes data that states that 13% of primary schools are academies (compared with 60% of secondary schools). Of primary schools inspected in that academic year, 2% were judged inadequate, 16% required improvement, 64% were good and 17% outstanding. Following the election result in 2015, the new Conservative Government has brought in the Education and Adoption Bill (DfE, 2015c) that extends its powers of intervention to force more schools (defined as 'coasting') to become sponsored academies (Watt, 2015).

The importance of Ofsted inspectors' judgement on the quality of teaching was further enhanced by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI), Sir Michael Wilshaw, who stipulated that a school cannot be judged outstanding overall³ unless teaching is also outstanding (Wilshaw, 2012). This edict was included in the September 2012 Ofsted evaluation schedule (Ofsted, 2012b: 25), which was the second schedule in 2012. Guidance in earlier versions of the Ofsted handbook allowed for the possibility that a school could be declared outstanding overall if teaching was good (rather than outstanding) (Ofsted, 2012a: 20). Sir Michael Wilshaw also emphasised the importance of headteachers' and governors' role in improving teaching – what he described as the 'leadership of teaching and learning' (Ofsted, 2012c). The impact of these changes was reflected in newspaper reports about 'downgrading schools' formerly judged outstanding (Harrison, 2013 and Kershaw, 2013). Of 155 outstanding schools (with good rather than outstanding teaching) re-inspected between September 2012 and July 2013, 111 were 'downgraded': 91 were judged good, 18 required improvement and two were judged inadequate.

The focus on teaching during inspections has shifted in the past two years with the September 2014 framework (Ofsted, 2014a) making it clear that Ofsted does not have a preferred teaching style and inspectors are no longer allowed to grade teaching in a lesson (Wilshaw, 2014a). Prior to September 2014, inspectors graded the quality of teaching in every lesson that they observed (if there was enough

³ Since 2012, schools are given four graded judgements: the effectiveness of leadership and management; the quality of teaching; pupils' behaviour and safety; and pupils' achievement. There is also an important overall effectiveness judgement, by which a school is described as 'good', 'outstanding' etc. The four areas have been changed slightly for September 2015. Schools are also given grades for early years and for sixth form provision and outcomes, where applicable.

evidence) and, until 2009, inspectors also gave an overall grade for the lesson. Inspection frameworks after 2012 stipulate that teaching is judged 'over time' (for example, Ofsted, 2012b; 2014a); meaning that inspectors need to find out what teaching is typically like by looking at pupils' work and talking to pupils, rather than relying solely on the observation of lessons. Although many of these changes occurred after my research interviews with headteachers and teachers, I have referred to them where relevant.

The way teachers teach has been the subject of much public debate and research over the past 30 years (for example, Alexander et al, 1992; Hattie, 2009; Husbands and Pearce, 2012; Slater et al, 2009). The quality of teaching has been recognised as a key driver in raising standards (for example, Chetty et al, 2011; DfE, 2010a; Mourshed et al, 2010; Rowe, 2004; Slater et al, 2009). A report by Ganley et al (2007:1) referred to meta-analyses that pointed to teacher quality as a 'significant, if not dominant, variable in achievement outcomes'. Their report describes the difficulty of achieving a common agreement on what is meant by quality teaching. Hattie (2015) suggests that variability in effectiveness of teachers accounts for most of the in-school variation in student outcomes in PISA tests (OECD, 2010). Husbands and Pearce (2012) describe nine claims from research about 'great pedagogy' and quote from Machin and Murphy's research (2011:5) that indicates the importance of teachers on individual student outcomes.

Alexander (2004:19) defined pedagogy as 'both the act of teaching and its attendant discourse, framed by ideas, values and evidence' and concluded that despite the National Strategies there was 'still no [primary] pedagogy in England'. I consider this to be significant because this research is about teaching pedagogy and how it is defined and evaluated by Ofsted inspectors. If there is no general acceptance in England about what constitutes good practice then how is Ofsted expected to evaluate it? Hattie (2009: 2) ponders the question— why, if there is so much known about 'what makes a difference in the classroom', they [classrooms] 'are hardly different from 200 years ago' (Hattie, 2009:3, citing Tyack and Cuban, 1995).

In the past, public and political interest tended to centre on secondary schools and the examination systems. Since Ofsted began, there has been more focus on primary education and classroom pedagogy. Reports such as that of the 'Three Wise Men' (Alexander et al, 1992) commented on the differences in the quality of teaching and standards between and within primary schools. The focus on outcomes, accountability and league tables has put the spotlight on the end of key stage classes, particularly Year 6, and inevitably impacted on how teachers teach and school leaders manage. Teaching to the test has been criticised, for example, in the recent DfE White Paper (DfE, 2010a). The teaching of reading has been a particular focus, with debates around the relative merits of synthetic versus analytic phonics (Wyse and Styles, 2007). Synthetic phonics has been advocated by Rose (2006), based on research (for example, Johnston and Watson, 2003) and supported by the government (for example, DfES, 2007), though there is not universal agreement (Torgerson et al, 2006; Wyse and Styles 2007). Primary schools are inspected to the same framework as secondaries, but because of their generally smaller cohort size, the pressure on individual teachers and likelihood of them being observed by inspectors (particularly for Year 2 and 6) are much greater (HOC, 1999).

My thesis explores the rationale for the criteria devised by Ofsted and used by inspectors to make judgements about the quality of teaching, and how these criteria have changed since 1993 until 2015. I now explain my personal reasons and perspective for choosing this particular research and present an explanation for the theoretical framework I have adopted to locate my research in an academic context that I hope will add value to educational research.

My personal interest

My interest in investigating Ofsted's criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching stems from over 20 years' personal experience as an inspector in England and overseas. From 1991 to 2000, I was one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) of schools and saw at

first hand the huge reduction in HMI numbers and the introduction of Ofsted in 1992. I was part of an HMI team that prepared guidelines for monitoring Ofsted inspections from 1993, and I trained and assessed potential team and lead inspectors (called registered inspectors at that time). As an HMI I was trained to 'do good as you go', and believed in the maxim 'improvement through inspection' (Matthews and Sammons, 2004: 18) and the importance of feeding back to teachers after observations. Since leaving Ofsted and working more directly with schools, especially during my role as an adviser for the London Challenge project (Hutchings et al, 2012) supporting under-performing schools, I have seen the impact of Ofsted from the other side. I have observed how the threat of 'an Ofsted' impacts on headteachers' practice, resulting in performativity (Ball, 1997; 2003; 2013; Jeffrey, 2002; Osgood, 2006; Perryman, 2006; 2009). I have seen how headteachers use the Ofsted criteria in their own monitoring of teaching and how teachers prepare to be inspected.

My initial interest in this research stemmed from a desire to find out if Ofsted's teaching criteria hindered more creative approaches in the classroom as teachers strive towards what they consider to be 'a good Ofsted lesson'. This interest led me to explore the criteria themselves in more detail. Gilroy and Wilcox (1997) noted that there has been little criticism of the Ofsted criteria and that there is an almost universal acceptance of them. Perryman (2006) describes the way that secondary teachers in a school in special measures have no choice but to conform to the expected criteria, but she does not go into the criteria in any detail. There have been a few constant critics of the criteria, such as former senior primary HMI Colin Richards, who has questioned the use of terms in the criteria and describes the expectation for outstanding teaching as 'outstanding nonsense' (Richards, 2015). Prior to Ofsted, Abbott (1990: 47) quoted from Marriott (1985) who criticised 'HMI's failure to explain their criteria for evaluation'. One aim of this research is to help partly fill this gap in literature about Ofsted's criteria by focusing on the establishment of the teaching criteria and how they are perceived and used by a sample of primary school headteachers and teachers.

The research was qualitative in nature as defined by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and based on the epistemological position of interpretivism and an ontological position of

constructionism (Bryman 2008). In chapter 3, I explain how I considered and why I rejected mixed methods and grounded theory methods, although I drew on ideas from the latter. I drew inspiration from Booth et al (1995:6, quoted in Curtis et al, 2014:1) who defined research as 'gathering the information you need to answer a question and thereby help you solve a problem'.

The research included a review of relevant related literature, including: the history of inspection; the political context and possible influences on the teaching criteria; the impact of inspections on schools and performativity; and how the teaching criteria have changed over the years since 1993. The literature review also contributed to an exploration of how the criteria changed over the years and possible influences, including political ones. I undertook semi-structured interviews (Curtis et al, 2014:114-5; Newby, 2010: 340-342) with three former and one current HMI to ask for their views about the criteria and how they were developed and had a further telephone conversation with another HMI. I undertook semi-structured interviews with a sample of ten headteachers, mainly in London schools and most of whom were known to me. I also interviewed pairs of teachers in these schools. I used face-to-face semi-structured interviews because I considered that this would be the most informative approach. The interview timetable and questions are included as appendices 1 and 3.

In order to explore the development of Ofsted's teaching criteria, I decided to delve back to the origins of school inspection by HMI in England in 1839. As McCulloch (2011:254) has suggested, 'historical research has the capacity to illuminate the past, patterns of continuity and change over time, and the origins of current structures and relationships'. From my personal knowledge as an HMI, I was aware that Ofsted's first handbook for inspection (Ofsted, 1993) was written by HMI in a very short time. I therefore decided to investigate how HMI had evolved and the influence of significant education acts such as 1944 (BOE, 1944) and 1988 Education Reform Act (DES, 1988) on inspection prior to 1992 when Ofsted was established by the Education (Schools) Act 1992 (DES, 1992). I also interviewed two former HMI who had responsibilities relating to the guidance and training of inspectors for Ofsted, in order to hear their views.

Theoretical framework

Before finally deciding on a Bourdieuan theoretical framework, I was attracted to Foucault's notions of power and discipline (Marshall, 2002, for example), to help me understand and analyse the 'power' of Ofsted and its impact on headteachers and teachers. Several authors have described Ofsted's power and impact in Foucauldian terms (for example, Ball, 2003; Ozga, 2009; Perryman, 2007; Woods and Jeffrey, 1998). I decided to draw on Bourdieu's thinking tools of habitus and field (Jenkins, 2002), as these have been used less often in research about the impact of Ofsted inspections. Reay (1995: 361) states that Bourdieu describes his concepts as 'open concepts designed to guide empirical work' (Bourdieu, 1990:107). I attempted to use Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' to guide my analysis of data and to interpret various actors' responses to questions about Ofsted's criteria for teaching. I identified the concept of a 'field of (Ofsted) inspection' and used this to indicate how the habitus and symbolic capital of the various actors possibly affected their behaviour and practice. I refer to how the unintentional pressure and demands made by Ofsted on schools and additional inspectors (who inspect schools on behalf of Ofsted but are not Ofsted employees) can be described as what Bourdieu called 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). I consider the idea of misrecognition by those with the most symbolic power (HMI in Ofsted) and believe that there is synergy with the way Bourdieu describes symbolic violence (in relation to gender domination):

Symbolic violence accomplishes itself through an act of cognition and of misrecognition that lies beyond – or beneath – the controls of consciousness and will. (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:171)

In my analysis of data from the interviews, I considered responses in terms of interviewees' institutional or collective habitus (Reay, 2005). I suggest that the following groups may each have an institutional habitus: HMI (Ofsted employees); teachers; and headteachers. I discuss in the chapter on methodology how there is not universal agreement about the concept 'institutional habitus' (see Atkinson, 2011;

2013; Burke et al, 2013, for example), but despite this, believe that it has relevance for my research findings and I define how I used the term.

Reflexivity and positionality

I was very conscious throughout this research of my own positionality and potential bias, because of my former role as an HMI and current work as an additional inspector. I acknowledge that I undertook the research as an 'insider' (Curtis et al, 2014:177) and was aware that I should draw on my own experience sparingly in order to allow the voices of my interviewees to be heard more strongly. Reflexivity was an important component of Bourdieu's work (Swartz, 1997; Thomson, 2010) and this reminded me to constantly reflect on the limitations of my findings and the subjectivity of my choices and interpretations, including my data analysis 'lens' (Punch and Oacea, 2014: 50).

In the methodology chapter I describe how I have approached the research from an ethical and reflexive standpoint, drawing on the work of Burke (2012), in particular her 'reflexive collaboration' approach by using a number of strategies to involve the participants as much as possible. I considered how my positionality may have affected the way I asked questions during the interviews and how interviewees responded to my questions. In analysing the data from the transcripts, I undertook a reflexive critique (see for example, appendix 12) after each transcription and review of the interview. During the research I reflected on how the research had affected my positionality (Curtis et al, 2014), in particular how I felt about Ofsted inspections and their impact on teachers. This changing perspective and development of my reflective philosophy evolved during the years of my research and especially after the interviews with headteachers and teachers and I have attempted to describe it in the concluding chapter.

New knowledge in the field

There is a wealth of literature relating to the impact of Ofsted inspections on performativity and teachers' stress (for example, Ball, 1997; 2003; 2013; Case et al,

2000; Chapman, 2002; Cullingford, 1999; Perryman, 2005; 2006; 2007; 2009). There has been relatively little focus on the Ofsted teaching criteria and how they have been used by schools. Ofsted has been the subject of much debate and criticism since its inception and the level of this seems to have been stepped up since the appointment in 2012 of the current HMCI, Sir Michael Wilshaw, who has brought in a number of changes not all of which have been very popular with schools and the teaching unions in particular. Some of these, such as the inspection of teaching 'over time' and not grading teaching in lessons (Ofsted, 2014a), were raised by and with interviewees. There was also a change of government during the research and I explored possible impacts of this in the areas that I have been researching. I attempted to keep abreast of developments and included current literature in the literature review chapters as well as in the data analysis and summary of my findings.

I believe that this research will contribute to knowledge of how the Ofsted teaching criteria have developed since the first guidance in 1993, and what has influenced the changes and developments. It will also add to an exploration of how headteachers and teachers view and use the teaching criteria in their own practice. The Bourdieuan interpretation of interviewees' responses in terms of their habitus and field, will also add a new dimension to the research about the impact of Ofsted and its inspection guidance. There are still many unanswered questions arising from this research and many potential areas to explore further. These are outlined in chapter 7.

Research questions

These are my research questions:

- How have Ofsted's criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching changed since 1993 (when Ofsted inspections first started)?
- What have been the key policy drivers and other influences on the teaching criteria?
- How do ten primary headteachers view the Ofsted criteria and use them to influence classroom practice in their schools?

- How do primary teachers from the headteachers' schools view the Ofsted criteria and use them to influence their own classroom practice?

The next chapter includes a review of literature in this field, including the history of inspection and political contexts surrounding the evolution of school inspections in England. I analyse the Ofsted teaching criteria from 1993 to 2015 to explore how and suggest why they have changed. I have been conscious that my focus has necessarily omitted significant development in how Ofsted inspections have been carried out because I have honed in on a small but very significant part of the inspection framework. Although my focus has been on the wording of the teaching criteria and how this has changed, I have also explored how the criteria are interpreted and used by inspectors on inspections, particularly in the last three years when the quality of teaching has moved to the forefront of inspection interest.

Chapter 2 Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review has served a number of purposes for my research. It helped me to understand the background to Ofsted and how and why the teaching criteria had developed. The literature review has also enabled me to explore other research in the field and to be well prepared for the research interviews with the HMI, headteachers and teachers.

The historical literature provided a context for the research. Cohen et al (2003:159) suggest that historical research is extremely important in the field of education as it can 'help us understand how our present educational system came about...and why educational theories and practices developed.' Although my research questions relate to the period after the introduction of Ofsted, from the first Ofsted (1993) inspection framework, I attempted to apply McCulloch's (2011:254) notion that historical research has 'the capacity to illuminate the past, patterns of continuity and change over time, and the origins of current structures and relationships' by delving further back into how school inspections began in England in the mid nineteenth century.

The literature review focuses on four main areas: the history of school inspections and the creation of Ofsted; the political context and influence on education and inspection between 1993 (when inspections started) and July 2015; how Ofsted's criteria for judging the quality of teaching have changed since 1993; and the impact of inspection on primary schools and performativity. There is overlap between the first two sections since a great deal of the history of inspection is linked to government policies; the Conservative Government introduced Ofsted as a non-ministerial department in 1992 (Education (Schools) Act, DES, 1992) 'with a remit to concentrate clearly on the task of inspecting' (Maclure, 1998:20). Section 2.3 focuses on how government policy impacted on the teaching criteria, whereas section 2.2 concentrates more broadly on the history of inspection. The next

section (2.4) reviews the structure and contents of the criteria themselves from the first ones in 1993 to the present day. There have been 11 significant Ofsted frameworks since 1993 and in this section I review the different criteria for teaching and consider factors such as educational research that may have influenced them. The last section focuses on the impact of inspections on primary schools and the literature around performativity.

Ofsted has rarely been out of the headlines since the first inspections in 1993, but recently this has been even more evident. Some of the reasons for these recent headlines are beyond the scope of this research, such as the 'Trojan Horse' episode (HOC, 2015), in which Ofsted's inspections were criticised for failing to identify concerns about radicalisation and school governance; schools that had been judged as outstanding were re-inspected and found to be failing (Beale, 2015).

Since I started the research there have been two different governments and one change of HMCI. Sir Michael Wilshaw's appointment in 2012 heralded a number of changes that have had a significant impact on how inspectors evaluate the quality of teaching. I have kept up to date with these changes by adding recent contemporary literature. Ofsted has recently been subjected to a great deal of public criticism, particularly from the unions and local government who have called for an overhaul of the organisation (ATL, 2012; Bousted, 2014; NUT, 2014; Pott-Negrine, 2015). Ofsted has attempted to respond to these criticisms and the literature review includes some of the documents that indicate how.

2.2 History of inspection and the coming of Ofsted

The account that follows is a review of literature describing the provenance of Ofsted from its roots in the inspections of schools in England by HMI since 1839. The historical narrative helps to explain how HMI (referred to collectively as 'The Inspectorate') way of working developed and how it influenced the approach and criteria eventually adopted by Ofsted. References to the political context and how

Ofsted developed and changed after 1992 are considered in greater detail in section 2.3.

1839 to 1870

Goodings and Dunford (1990) describe the history of HMI (of schools) from their origin in 1839 when the Committee of the Council on Education recommended the appointment of inspectors, whose role was to inspect schools aided by public money. The Council were reported to expect these first HMI to:

Convey to conductors and teachers of private schools in different parts of the country, a knowledge of all improvements in the art of teaching, and likewise to report to this Committee the progress made in education from year to year. (Goodings and Dunford, 1990:1)

The appointment of inspectors caused much controversy, according to Goodings and Dunford (1990), particularly amongst Anglican Church leaders who insisted that inspectors of Anglican schools be approved by the archbishops. The first two inspectors were finally appointed in November 1839: Reverend John Allen and Hugh Seymour Tremenhare. Dunford (1998) records that both men were Oxbridge-educated and in their late twenties or early thirties, which is very young by today's standards for inspectors, who are typically in their forties or older.

Brighouse (1981: 363) describes how 'the first instructions for inspectors by Dr Kay-Shuttleworth of the Poor Law Commission in 1839 read like a brief for a modern adviser in an enlightened Authority'. I consider that the quote Brighouse included and also quoted in Dunford (1998) is worth reproducing in full as it is very relevant to this research and the impact on schools:

It is of the utmost consequence that you should bear in mind that this inspection is not intended as a means of exercising control, but of affording assistance; that it is not to be regarded as operating for the restraint of

local efforts, but for their encouragement and that its chief objects will not be attained without the cooperation of the school committees; the inspector having no power to interfere and being instructed not to offer any advice or information excepting where it is invited. (Dunford, 1998: 2)

This quote is interesting and topical because it suggests that inspection is not about 'control' and that inspectors should not offer advice. Ofsted has attempted to incorporate Kay-Shuttleworth's principles into its inspection philosophy, but some argue that Ofsted is controlling. For example, De Wolf and Janssens (2007) refer to inspection as a controlling mechanism. Inspection results in performativity as schools attempt to perform to what they perceive as Ofsted's expectations (Ball, 2013; Peal, 2014).

From 1844 onwards, the duties expected of HMI continued to increase, as did the numbers of inspectors, according to Dunford (1998). The 17 or so HMI at that time were expected to inspect and report on schools, test 'pupil-teachers' at regular intervals, and examine older teachers for Certificates of Merit. After 1862, HMI also had to assess individual pupils' standards in the '3Rs' (Dunford, 1998: 6), for pupils whose attendance was over 200 days in the year. Grants to schools were withheld or reduced for 'faults in instruction or discipline' determined by HMI. Inspectors' assistants were appointed to help out with the assessment of pupils. Horn (1980:130) describes the plight and low status of the Victorian teachers and how HMI at the time 'condemned the low pay and poor standards which prevailed, with a number of women teachers earning less than £15 per annum'.

1870 to 1970s

After the 1870 Education Act, HMI ceased inspecting religious education and there was no longer a requirement for inspectors of Anglican schools to be clergymen. HMI began to be recruited through public advertisements and had prior teaching experience. The Inspectorate was reorganised along secular lines into eight divisions. The first Chief Inspector, Reverend T Sharpe, was appointed in 1890.

The size of the Inspectorate continued to grow and was around 350 close to the end of the nineteenth century. Inspectors then started to inspect secondary schools, established following the 1902 Education Act (Dunford, 1998:11).

Although not entirely relevant to this research, it is of interest to note that it was not until 1896 that women were appointed as HMI and even then assumed an inferior role with the title 'sub-inspector (women)' (Dunford, 1998:10). The post of 'Chief Women Inspector' was established in 1905, but a marriage bar remained until the late 1940s and women HMI were paid less than men until the 1960s.

Goodings and Dunford (1990) describe how HMI had considerable freedom from political interference or accountability, apart from the expectation that they should submit a weekly diary in which they described their school visits. In the early days there was no minister with responsibility for education and the Committee of Council met rarely and had many other responsibilities. The authors conclude that the way that HMI were established and their relationship with the department set the precedence for them to have considerable independence and professional autonomy. This independence has been disputed. For example, Wilkin (1988: 81) refers to Lawton and Gordon (1987) in suggesting that 'The extent to which the Inspectorate has ever been independent of the government in power is debatable, although the distance between it and the centre has varied over time'. The government's influence on the framework for inspections and the criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching are considered in detail in the next chapter.

Dunford (1998:101-102) states that during this period 'there was no HMI policy on teaching methods' or handbook for inspection. The expectation was that through meetings and discussions HMI would come to an agreement about what they saw. Dunford went on to add that the assumption was that 'HMI were experienced educationalists who could recognise good teaching and learning when they saw it'. Mortimore (1992: 26) noted that HMI were 'recruited from successful practitioners able to draw on a wealth of national experience as well as a detailed subject knowledge'. Dunford (1998) explains that HMI published a booklet in 1985 (DES, 1985) that 'attempted to define the qualities of good teaching'. Broadhead (1987)

also describes how early HMI/ DES documents helped to define a view about effective pedagogy, a view endorsed by Lee and Fitz (1997). For example, the HMI document, Curriculum Matters 2 (DES, 1985: 10-11) promoted teaching that matches 'the abilities, attainments, interests and experience of pupils' and that 'pupils should learn in a variety of ways according to the task in hand'. It also suggests that there is no 'single style of teaching will be suitable for all purpose', and indicates that teaching to the whole class is sometimes appropriate.

Dunford (1998) records that inspectors had opportunities to meet and discuss observations at their annual conferences. This tradition continued during my first year as an HMI in 1991 when I discovered that consensus was reached through sharing of observed good practice and the many opportunities for HMI to work together across the country. Perry (2008:44), who was Chief Inspector of Schools from 1981 to 1986, informs us that 'uniformity in standards of judgements' was established through the practice of HMI working with a range of colleagues in different settings. Lee and Fitz (1997: 41-42) argue that the 'close-knit nature of the (HMI) community' operated as what Fish (1980) referred to as an 'interpretative community' and that this helped to ensure a 'commonality of judgement'. Grubb (1999: 72) describes the HMI model as one of 'connoisseurship'. He comments on the generally positive acceptance by schools of HMI visits, although, he notes that once reports were published from 1983, schools started to complain about inconsistencies in HMI judgements. This concern about consistency was noted by Dunford (1998). Dunford and Goodings (1990: 6) observed that:

The Inspectorate clearly has a corporate educational philosophy. Good practice is judged not solely by its results, but also by how nearly it agrees with models of which HMI approve. Since the five-point scale, ranging from 'excellent' to 'poor', which they employ in assessing outcomes, cannot be wholly objective, teachers are likely to feel that it would be wise to adopt these practices.

This comment suggests that there were likely to be inconsistencies between HMI judgements about the quality of teaching because of the subjective nature of the process, despite the attempts to arrive at consensus through discussion. It also points towards the performativity of teachers as they respond to what is perceived to be the best practice according to the inspectors. Lee and Fitz (1997: 43) speaking about HMI and pedagogy note that 'it has long been the boast of the English and Welsh system that no teacher was directed as to how to teach. HMI would also argue that this is supported by the principle that they report what they see, rather than judge against pre-set criteria'. This matches the current view of HMCI who has insisted that Ofsted does not have a preferred teaching style (Wilshaw, 2013).

The history of HMI reveals some tensions in the relationship with the governments of the day, but not much about how criteria for judging the quality of teaching were arrived at. Bolton (1998), who was Senior Chief Inspector (SCI) during my first year as HMI in 1991, reports that HMIs' remit was to inform the government about the state of education based on inspection evidence. Bolton (1998: 46) continues that HMI priorities were 'determined by what ministers wanted and needed to know' and, 'between 1979 and 1992 ministers wanted and needed to know a lot as education moved to centre stage politically'.

Ruskin College speech and aftermath

In 1976, the Prime Minister James Callaghan made his famous speech on education at Ruskin College. Ball (2008) comments that in the speech Callaghan criticised amongst other things standards of school performance and referred to incompetent teachers. The phrase 'secret garden of the curriculum' was introduced and the role of HMI was called into question. Ball (2008: 74) describes how the speech 'opened up a set of policy agendas that were vigorously pursued by the Conservative governments of 1979-97'. Lee and Fitz (1997: 43) observe that Callaghan was criticising so-called progressive teaching methods, such as child-centred and personalised learning approaches, that were said to be failing pupils.

They suggest that this attack on pedagogy was unprecedented and has ‘developed over the years into a strident criticism’. The Inspectorate’s role in influencing and ultimately improving teaching pedagogy was being called into question by Callaghan.

Lee and Fitz (1997) note HMIs’ dilemma at the time of reporting as they find rather than relying on a set view about what is good practice or espousing a view about what constitutes quality. ‘If it works it is good’ was a phrase that I was told on many occasions as a young HMI in the early 1990s. I was encouraged to observe objectively and focus on pupils’ response in lessons, and to notice that a wide range of teaching approaches can be effective in helping pupils to learn. Whilst this was sound advice, it did not assure consistency of judgements between different HMI. The issue of consistency (or lack of) has been a concern about inspection since the start of Ofsted and continues to the present day (ATL, 2012; Barber, 2004; Cullingford et al, 1999; Forrest and Cooper, 2014; HOC, 2011; Maw, 1995).

Ball (2008: 71) describes the Black Papers (Cox and Boyson, 1975 and 1977), which were a series of papers written during the period 1969 to 1977, as a ‘response to and critique of comprehensive schooling by the political Right’. Dunford (1998) notes that the Black Paper authors also challenged the progressive education movement, which was at the heart of the Plowden Report (CAC, 1967). Dunford (1998: 152) states that most HMI ‘instinctively rejected the Black Papers’, but that there is evidence to suggest that HMIs’ approach to primary education was influenced by them. The Black Papers, according to Simon (1999: 396-400), were an ‘attack on the ideology of egalitarianism’ and on ‘progressive education’, with primary education coming in for particular criticism.

The Inspectorate’s Senior Chief Inspector (SCI) began issuing annual reports in 1989, based on a summary of HMIs’ inspection evidence in the preceding year and this practice has continued under Ofsted. Dunford (1998: 63) commented that the first annual report ‘caused a political storm’. The first and subsequent annual reports were often critical of teaching methods and, indirectly, of government

policies. Lee and Fitz (1997: 45-46) record that Baker, Secretary of State for Education between 1986 and 1989, and others on the New Right accused HMI of 'consecrating the profanity of progressive education'. Lee and Fitz (1997) suggest that this criticism of HMI contrasts with the reality, which was that HMIs' view of teaching was essentially conservative, as one of the 'Skilled Traditionalist', a model which, they contend, was carried forward into Ofsted's inspection framework.

Bolton (1998:47) explains that before, during and after the time of the Ruskin College speech, the role and existence of HMI were under threat: 'the main issue for HMI was its survival'. Despite this, Bolton contends that the Inspectorate produced some useful reports during this period, such as the Curriculum Matters series (DES, 1984, for example) that set out the content and structure for subjects that would later form part of the National Curriculum. The documents were often referred to as 'raspberry ripples' because of the pink stripe on the cover.

Goodings and Dunford (1990: 5) describe how Margaret Thatcher's government instigated an efficiency review in 1981 of the Inspectorate, believing that it was too large and spent 'too little time inspecting'. The review, led by Sir Derek Rayner, took two years and the report was, according to Goodings and Dunford (1990), rather complimentary about the Inspectorate, commending its professional independence and value, and probably not what the government had expected or wanted to hear. Bolton (2014), who was SCI a few years after the publication of the Rayner Report, comments that the report indicated a need to expand the Inspectorate in order to accommodate HMIs' increased role.

When Kenneth Baker took over as Secretary of State for Education in 1986, Lee and Fitz (1998) report that he was concerned about the close working relationship (and physical, since they shared the same building) between HMI and civil servants. Bolton (1998) describes how during this time, HMI were increasingly involved in inspecting all aspects of education including local education authorities. Bolton (1998: 51) adds that the inspection findings were rarely encouraging for the government, whose response 'swung increasingly towards irritation during John

MacGregor⁴ and Kenneth Clarke's terms in office'. Smith (2000) comments on the juxtaposition of the celebration in December 1989 of the 150th anniversary of HMI with the culling of HMI just three years later. I had just joined HMI when this reduction in numbers began, from over 450 when I started in January 1991 to around 200 two years later. It was a time of low morale and uncertainty as many HMI colleagues chose to leave. Maclure (1998: 21) describes how Ofsted began with a 'nucleus of 175 HMIs, sub-contracting the work of inspecting to 'registered' inspectors who (after training) would be invited to tender for inspection jobs'.

The birth of Ofsted

The table in appendix 4 puts the origin of Ofsted in context. It shows which political parties and secretaries of state for education were in post in the period leading up to and after the establishment of Ofsted in 1992. It also includes the names of the chief inspectors; called SCI prior to Ofsted and HMCI after 1992.

During the critical period between 1986 and 1992, there were three different secretaries of state under two different Conservative prime ministers. Their antipathy towards HMI and call for change accelerated under Kenneth Baker and the fate of HMI was sealed by Kenneth Clarke, under Prime Minister John Major. Smith (2000: 333- 334) records how John Major's 1991 Citizen's Charter and Parent's Charter were influential in a programme of turning 'HMI inspection of schools 'inside out', that is towards parents, school governors and the general public, and away from central government'. He quotes Bolton (1998) as saying that he feared that HMI were 'to be shunted into a siding. Its work will in future be directed away from the government and towards the schools'.

Bolton (1998) describes how Kenneth Clarke and John MacGregor were determined to establish a strong education policy with more frequent inspections of individual schools because of their concerns over quality in schools. They considered a number of options for achieving this, including the possibility of

⁴ Secretary of State for Education, 1989 to 1990, predecessor to Kenneth Clarke- see Appendix 4.

increasing the number of HMI from around 450 to 2000, before deciding on a market solution in which governing bodies would select their own inspection team from a list of registered inspection agencies. This model was modified during its passage through the House of Lords to the final arrangement which:

...no-one wanted. The political right was horrified by the creation of a huge, new central bureaucracy that, as well as impinging on the autonomy of individual schools, would control the market and use inspection teams that consisted largely of former or serving LEA inspectors. (Bolton, 1998: 53)

Baker (1993) describes how the education bill was rushed through parliament because of an impending election and was highly criticised in the House of Lords. Thomas (1998: 418) recorded a conversation with John Burchill, Chief Education Officer for Wandsworth, a 'Tory flagship' borough, in which Burchill complained that 'the monopoly of HMI has actually been strengthened and the best local arrangements are in danger of being dismantled'. Thomas (1998: 426) concludes that the Act 'appeared to please few people – certainly not HMI, but neither too LEAs, nor the politicians on the left, and not even the right-wing lobbyists who had brought about the upheaval'.

The new Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (OHMCI) was established by the Education (Schools) Act 1992 (DES, 1992) as a non-ministerial department, independent of the Department and the Secretary of State for Education. The OHMCI was later called the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) (Dunford, 1998). Lee and Fitz (1998: 239) describe how the new organisation (OHMCI/ Ofsted) occupied:

a very special statutory and constitutional position...in that it was a non-ministerial department of state. This gave the Chief Inspector an almost unique position in that although reporting to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Education he was not a member of the Secretary of State's department. This independence enabled the Chief Inspector to

comment critically on the condition of education in England in any way that he thought fit. To this end he instituted the annual lecture and continued the publication of an annual report, an innovation of the last Chief Inspector of Schools, Eric Bolton.

Lee and Fitz (1998) describe how the first HMCI, Sir Stewart Sutherland, who was determined to establish Ofsted's independence, moved his team out of Sanctuary Buildings, which was the home of the DES/ DFE, and across the river to Elizabeth House. Ofsted moved a few years later to Alexandra House on the Kingsway because of asbestos issues with Elizabeth House. The Ofsted team comprised a cohort of under 200 HMI and a large number of administrative staff, all of whom were civil servants. At that time there were also a number of offices around the country to which most HMI were attached. These offices provided administrative support and places for teams of HMI to meet. These district offices were eventually abandoned around the end of the 20th century to save money. Continuity between the former HM Inspectorate and Ofsted was maintained, according to Dunford (1998), by most of the senior positions in Ofsted going to HMI.

Maw (1998: 146) describes the powerful position of HMCI in his role 'at the apex of a system that Giddens (1985) has described as one of authoritative rather than allocative resources'. This description of the power of the position of HMCI chimes with a Bourdieuan view of symbolic power, (discussed in chapter 3), or 'political power par excellence' as quoted by English and Bolton (2015: 62). Dunford (1998: 212) comments that in the early years of Ofsted, as education became more prominent in politics and the media, 'the politicisation of inspection increased'.

In order to meet the demand of inspecting every school in England on a four/ six yearly cycle, a large cadre of inspectors, including lay inspectors (who were persons with no teaching experience – the 'man in the street'), were recruited and trained during 1992 and 1993 (Millett and Johnson, 1999). The Education Schools Act (DES, 1992) introduced the term 'registered inspectors': persons who would bid for inspection contracts and lead teams of inspectors, all of whom were trained and

assessed by HMI. Lee and Fitz (1998) explain that many of the new registered inspectors were former local authority inspectors and advisers or retired HMI. They describe the stress that these registered inspectors were under and how this is rarely reported.

HMI's role at the start of Ofsted, as described by Dunford (1998), included administration of the new system, training and assessing inspectors, and monitoring inspections and reports. To guide the new inspectors, HMI produced a Handbook for the Inspection of Schools (Ofsted, 1993) which set out the criteria inspectors were expected to use to make their judgements (Dunford, 1998). A new set of guidance has been written for each of the ten subsequent inspection frameworks between 1993 (first inspections of secondary schools) and 2015. Appendix 5 compares the main areas that are reported in each of the Ofsted frameworks. Inspection guidance has been prepared for each framework by HMI, backed up by regular newsletters and further/ subsidiary guidance. The guidance has included increasingly detailed criteria for awarding grades for each aspect of a school's effectiveness, including the quality of teaching. The Ofsted inspection grading scale has changed over the years as indicated in the table below:

Table 2.1 Ofsted's grading scale for inspection judgements⁵

Year	1993 - 1995	1996 - 2004	2005 - 2011	2012- 2013	2014 - 2015	Sep 2015
Grades for aspects	1= Excellent, 2= Good 3= satisfactory 4= un satisfactory 5= poor	1= excellent, 2= very good 3= good 4= satisfactory 5= unsatisfactory 6= poor 7= very poor	1= outstanding 2= good 3= satisfactory 4= inadequate	1= outstanding 2= good 3= requires improvement 4= inadequate	As for 2012	As for 2012
Grading of lessons and teaching	Grade awarded for the lesson and teaching overall. % of good etc teaching was usually reported.	Grade awarded for the lesson and teaching overall. % of good etc teaching was usually reported.	Grade awarded for the lesson (until 2009) and teaching overall	No overall lesson grade, but teaching in a lesson graded (as well as behaviour and achievement)	No grade for teaching in lessons	No grade for teaching in lessons

⁵ These time periods were chosen to coincide with significant changes to the grading scales.

Along with changes to the grading scale, there have been significant changes to the Ofsted inspection framework, such as the notice given to schools before an inspection, the frequency and duration of inspections and what areas are inspected and reported on. These changes and how they impacted on the inspection criteria are considered more in the next section.

Criticism of Ofsted

Ofsted has been subject to much criticism from its outset. Much of the initial concerns related to the way inspections were undertaken. Thrupp (1998:196) described inspection as based on 'the politics of blame', whereby schools are responsible for students' achievements and failures (rather than the context of the school and extent of disadvantage etc). The deployment of non-educators as 'lay inspectors' – established in the Education (Schools) Act 1992 (DES, 1992: Schedule 2, 3.2 (a)): 'at least one member of the inspection team is a person.... without personal experience in the management of any school or the provision of education in any school' – was criticised (Hustler and Goodwin, 2000). Inspection teams continued to include lay inspectors until 2005. Lay inspectors were not expected to make judgements about the quality of teaching, though they did observe lessons. My own experience suggests that they did judge the quality of teaching and many of them became 'professional inspectors' and participated in hundreds of inspections within a few years. These inspectors continued to inspect as regular team members after the requirement for lay inspectors was removed. In 2012, Ofsted prevented anyone from inspecting who had not taught and all additional inspectors were asked to submit their qualified teacher status number. A group of affected persons established an Association of Free-Lance Inspectors and prepared to take legal action against Ofsted because of loss of livelihood at very short notice; I could not find evidence of the outcome of this action.

Some of the early criticism related to the approach of the Chief Inspector, Chris Woodhead⁶ (for example, Alexander, 1999; Grubb, 1999). Grubb (1999: 77) stated

⁶ Sir Chris Woodhead died in June 2015 aged 68.

that 'Chris Woodhead has single-handedly done considerable damage to the process [of inspection]; his public presentations have been consistently demeaning to teachers and other educators and have stressed the large numbers of incompetent teachers'. These statements relate to Chris Woodhead's remark to the press in 1995 that there were 15,000 incompetent teachers, based on Ofsted data about lesson observations (Telegraph, 2015).

Many of the public critics of Ofsted were academics in university education departments who were particularly concerned about the inspection of initial teacher training, which is beyond the scope of this research. Of particular note is Cullingford's (1999) edited collection of a number of academics' evidence and views about what they considered to be the shortcomings of the Ofsted system. Their criticisms include: the levels of stress on teachers caused by inspections; inconsistencies in inspectors' judgements; the cost of the system as a whole and for individual schools; and whether inspection does bring about improvement (which was the Ofsted strapline at the time). Fitzgibbon in Cullingford (1999: 98) was especially strident in her negative views about Ofsted. She criticised inspectors for a lack of research methodology when observing lessons and for how they 'rated teachers on a 7 point scale'. In fact, Ofsted guidance has always emphasised that inspectors are evaluating the quality of teaching observed and not the teacher (for example, Ofsted, 1993: 48- 50; 1995: 66- 71; 1999: 46- 49; 2005b: 8-9; 2009a: 31- 32; Ofsted, 2015a: 57-62). Fitzgibbon (in Cullingford, 1999:101) goes on to say that the 'entire system seems to be based on received wisdom rather than checked by proper methods (sic). The problem here is that the received 'wisdom' may not be adequate'. She criticises the sampling of lessons, the reliability and validity of judgements, drawing on feedback from 51 headteachers who had been recently inspected. Fitzgibbon (in Cullingford,1999: 115) concludes that 'Ofsted may have substantially damaged the quality of education provided by schools by causing them to spend time, money and energy unproductively'. Fitzgibbon headed up an anti-Ofsted organisation known as the Office for Standards in Inspection (Ofstin) that issued many critical comments and reports about the new Ofsted system.

Alexander (in Cullingford, 1999:123) comments specifically about the criteria used by Ofsted inspectors. He suggests that the 'application of these criteria is not an exact science'. He raises questions about the level of training that inspectors receive and whether this is adequate to 'secure absolute consistency in the interpretation and application of the inspection criteria'. Alexander (in Cullingford, 1999: 129) also notes that the inspection framework and criteria were informed by and drew on published research. He states that some of the wording in the Ofsted criteria for the quality of teaching in the 1995 version of the framework were 'derived from' a report that he had co-authored in 1992 (the 'Three Wise Men' enquiry into primary education (Alexander et al, 1992)). Ofsted has not confirmed or disputed this claim.

A Commons Select Committee on Education and Employment met in 1999 to review the work of Ofsted, and the final report (House of Commons, 1999: 1-9) commented on the fact that the Ofsted 'inspection system has generated a degree of controversy, often accompanied by a high media profile'. The Committee sought evidence from a wide range of people, including headteachers, inspectors, former chief inspectors, teachers' union representatives, inspection contractors, registered inspectors, the Further Education Funding Council, university lecturers and members of Ofstin. The Committee reported on all aspects of inspection including the amount of notice given to schools, the role of lay inspectors, the tendering process, the role and importance of self-evaluation and the perception of inspections by teachers and headteachers. The Committee also considered whether the inspection framework was an 'orthodoxy' (sic). The report (HOC, 1999: 9) stated that many schools use the inspection framework to 'evaluate their own practice, and that many have found it a useful tool for doing so', although they noted a concern that the framework might be 'uncritically accepted' by schools. The Committee concluded that the Framework had not created an 'orthodoxy', because it did not dictate how 'good quality teaching should be achieved'. Ball (2003) and Perryman (2009), amongst others, would not agree with the conclusion that schools do not use the framework as an orthodoxy.

The Committee reported on the way that inspectors observe and grade lessons. The report (HOC, 1999) noted that primary teachers are observed more often than secondary teachers (in a ratio of approximately 7:3) and for shorter periods of time. The Committee was critical of the system whereby the lead inspector was expected to provide a written report on the teaching grades awarded to each teacher (Fidler et al, 1998). This practice where individual teachers were given a print-out of the grades awarded for lessons observed by inspectors was highly contentious (as evidenced by the comments in the Select Committee report and my own experience as a lead inspector) and often inaccurate. Fortunately, the requirement only survived for a year and was withdrawn by Ofsted because of the problems of accuracy and the concerns raised by schools about the practice.

The Select Committee (HOC, 1999) noted that inspectors typically only observed part of a lesson and they recommended that inspectors should aim to observe whole lessons where possible. The report went on to suggest that spending too little time (say 20 minutes) in lessons could result in an inaccurate impression of teaching in the school. They recommended that inspectors spend more time in lessons and, in particular, should observe the whole of the literacy hour (which had just been introduced as part of the National Strategy for literacy in primary schools). The Committee (HOC, 1999) also suggested that there should be more discussion between inspectors and school staff before the start of an inspection. At that time, lead inspectors (registered inspectors, as they were called then) used to visit a school several weeks before the inspection to undertake a pre-inspection visit. These pre-inspection visits were useful ways to establish good relationships with staff and to explain to staff, governors and parents how the inspection would be undertaken. These visits no longer happen because of the shorter notice given to schools and the need to reduce inspection costs.

A recent report on school leaders' views of Ofsted inspections (Ofsted, 2015g:1-3) included an analysis of 22,800 responses to Ofsted's post-inspection survey (2009–14) and of responses from 829 school leaders to an online impact survey

(2013–14). The findings from the post-inspection survey were mainly positive: 98% of respondents indicated that they would use the inspection recommendations to improve their school; 92% reported that the demands of being inspected were reasonable and that the judgements were fair and accurate; and 82% felt that the benefits of inspection outweigh the pressures of being inspected. The impact survey findings also indicated that the majority of school leaders feel that inspection benefited their school, with, for example, 88% reporting that they had made changes to their school as a result of inspection and 81% saying that inspection helped them to improve by providing an accurate analysis of their strengths and weaknesses. The report notes that schools judged to be inadequate had lower response rates and were more negative than other schools.

The positive response from schools in this Ofsted report cited above (Ofsted, 2015g) contrasts with the public and media portrayal of how inspections are perceived. Since the appointment of the latest Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw, in January 2012, the amount of criticism seems to have risen again to the extent that unions threatened strike action. In March 2013, members of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) passed a vote of no confidence in the Secretary of State, Michael Gove, and the Chief inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw (Garner, 2013). Abrams (2012) said that there has been a big increase in complaints about Ofsted reports, possibly 1 in 12 of all inspections in the first five months of the new framework (that began in January 2012). She suggests that the 'rise in complaints may also be linked to the fact that Ofsted has a new, tough-talking chief inspector, who is not afraid to upset schools'. Abrams (2012) reports that Wilshaw declared, in a statement resonant of Chris Woodhead (see page 37), that '5,000 headteachers... lack leadership skills'. A Policy Exchange⁷ report (Waldegrave and Simons, 2014:12) was highly critical of aspects of Ofsted inspections. The report drew on evidence from schools and 'starts from the presumption that it is right and proper to have an independent schools inspectorate'. The report makes nine recommendations for the future of Ofsted, all of which appear to chime with the way that developments are heading; for

⁷ Policy Exchange is a centre-right organisation that describes itself as 'the UK's leading think tank': www.policyexchange.org.uk

example, shorter inspections for good schools; tightening up the training and assessment of additional inspectors; avoiding endorsing particular teaching methods; and reviewing the tendering process for inspections. Waldegrave and Simons (2014: 7) are very critical about lesson observations by inspectors, which they consider unreliable, invalid and leading to unnecessary performativity by schools. They conclude that:

the practice of lesson observations is symptomatic of many of the issues related to the balance of power between inspectors and schools [and recommend] – as part of a wider reform to the structure of school inspections – the total abolition of all routine lesson observations by Ofsted in the course of their standard inspections.

This view about the abolition of lesson observations does not seem to be one shared by Ofsted at this point. Ofsted issued documents for teachers about why inspectors observe lessons and what they look for (Ofsted, 2014d; 2014f) in order to explain the process whereby teaching is no longer graded when inspectors observe lessons. Ofsted's new inspection framework for September 2015 instructs inspectors to observe (but not grade) lessons as part of the evidence-gathering process to arrive at a judgement on teaching in a school.

Concerns have also been raised about the many recent changes to the inspection framework. For example, there have been five different Ofsted inspection frameworks since January 2012, with many minor changes in-between that are distributed to inspectors in the guise of subsidiary guidance (for example, Ofsted, 2013d; 2014g). Between September 2014 and July 2015, inspectors have been issued with over 30 emails from ISPs with additional guidance and criticisms about how inspection reports are written (for example, SERCO, 2015).

Complaints about Ofsted school inspections

Ofsted responded to my request in April 2015 for information about complaints, to enable me to establish whether they have increased in the last few years. Ofsted replied via a freedom of information letter, but said that they did not hold the data prior to 2012. The information post- 2012 is included in table 2.2. The complaints policy changed in 2013 and the new approach is a four-step process, where step 1 is dealing with complaints at source (during the inspection). Step 2 is where the complaint was not resolved during the inspection; the complaint is sent online to Ofsted within 10 days of the publication of the report and prompts an internal review. If still unresolved, the complaint can be referred to the Independent Complaints Adjudication Service for Ofsted (Ofsted, 2015a).

Table 2.2 Complaints about Ofsted school inspections

	Stage 1/ Step 2 complaints	Stage 2/ Step 3 complaints	Stage 3/ Step 4
2012 - 13	562 (8.4% of inspections) 20% upheld (partially or fully)	76 24% upheld (partially or fully)	16 (No information about the outcome)
2013 -14	475 (4% of inspections) 31% upheld (partially or fully)	62 23% upheld (partially or fully)	10

The data in the table suggests that the number of complaints fell in 2013-14 compared with the previous year. It is not possible, though, to compare how many inspections were over-turned because of flawed judgements. The Annual Report of 2013-14 (Ofsted, 2014h) includes information about the impact of complaints on inspections. It stated that in that year, 17 inspections were deemed flawed after step 2 and 14 had judgements changed. Ten inspections were judged to be flawed after step 3 and a further 12 had judgements changed. Mansell (2014) also commented on the difficulty of finding information about flawed inspection reports. It seems surprising that Ofsted has not gathered this information prior to 2012.

Ofsted has responded to criticisms over the years by changing the inspection framework, which has prompted criticism about changing 'goal posts'. The Select Committee report in 2011 (HOC, 2011) was critical about many aspects of Ofsted, not least the fact that its brief had expanded beyond the inspection of schools. The Committee report commented on the often misunderstood difference between additional inspectors (AIs) and HMI (who are full-time Ofsted employees and therefore seemingly have more credibility with schools) and negative comments about the former by teaching union representatives. The Committee concluded that there is little difference between the quality of additional inspectors and HMI, although they supported the notion of enhanced training for AIs (which has come to fruition). The Select Committee (HOC, 2011: 30) agreed with an inspector who was quoted as saying 'HMI are not universally better than AI and many AI are certainly better than HMI'. The Select Committee (HOC, 2011) also considered whether Ofsted should be abolished and concluded that it did 'not accept the case for the complete abolition of school inspection at this point', followed by some suggestions for improvement. Since this Select Committee report, Ofsted has produced a further inspection handbook for September 2015 (Ofsted, 2015k), in which some of the Committee's concerns, for example, not grading lessons, have been addressed.

Training of inspectors

The mandate for the first Ofsted inspections was set out in the Education Act (DES, 1992) and the initial batch of inspectors were trained by HMI in 1992. The training took place over five days in hotels around the country (Maw, 1995). The focus of the training was on understanding and applying the guidance and criteria in the Ofsted handbook for inspection. I led training in Swindon and in Llandudno between 1992 and 1994 and so have first-hand experience of the process that trainees experienced in those early days. Assessment took place during the five days and the HMI trainers would spend evenings marking assignments and making decisions as to whether trainees had passed or failed. There was a relatively high failure rate at that time; possibly accounted for by participants' lack of experience

of applying inspection criteria, which was a focus of the training. Subsequent training was outsourced to contractors, with monitoring of sessions by HMI. The Ofsted annual report (Ofsted, 1994b: 4) states that in the academic year 1993 to 1994 there was an 82% pass rate for the 385 who were trained as primary school registered (lead) inspectors. However, only 62% of the 1,356 who were trained and assessed as team inspectors passed. The training included discussions around case study materials based on anonymised school data. Participants watched videos of lessons and discussed their judgements and grades, drawing on Ofsted's newly written guidance and criteria.

The participants who had shown the most promise in those early training sessions (based on their responses to the assessments and contributions to the training sessions) were invited to become lead inspectors, or 'registered inspectors' (Lee and Fitz, 1998: 241), as defined by the 1992 Education Act (DES, 1992). There was further training and assessment of potential registered inspectors during inspections led by HMI. This pattern of training and assessment changed over the years, with assessment undertaken through one-day events in a conference centre close to Alexandra House, Ofsted's headquarters in London. Currently, trainee inspectors are trained via face-to-face sessions and have to sit an assessment. They are also assessed when they 'shadow' on inspections with a mentor who supports them and assesses their progress and contributions on a live two-day inspection. After successful completion of a shadow inspection they are then 'signed off' by taking part in another inspection where they are assessed again by another inspector.

The number of ISPs, which are the private companies that administer and manage inspections on behalf of Ofsted, has reduced from over 200 in the beginning to three – Tribal, CfBT and SERCO– that manage inspections in different parts of the country, through contracts with Ofsted. The reasons for reducing the numbers of providers was to cut costs and bring about an increase in consistency, with ISPs responsible for quality assurance of inspections in their areas of the country. As

from September 2015 the inspections of schools will be managed centrally and directly by Ofsted rather than through the ISPs (Wilshaw, 2014b and 2015l).

2.3 Political context and influence on inspection between 1993 and 2015

Introduction

The inspection frameworks and criteria have changed over the years since Ofsted inspections started in 1993, often in response to the prevailing political climate and policies as well as to criticism from schools and unions. Since Ofsted evolved from the era of HMI inspections, which began in the mid-nineteenth century, as described in the previous section, it is apposite to consider education acts prior to the 1992 Education Act, which established Ofsted and the regime of regular school inspections led by registered inspectors. Two acts prior to 1992 are considered – the 1944 Education Act (Butler Act) and the Education Reform Act 1988– because they had a bearing on what inspectors looked for and how they made judgements on the quality of education in schools.

From 1992 onwards, the following acts are considered: The Education Schools Act (1992) (DES, 1992), which established Ofsted; the Education Act 2005 (DfES, 2005); and the Education Act 2011 (DfE, 2011b). These acts have been included because they involve references to inspection that had a possible impact on the criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching. There were many other pieces of legislation relating to school inspections after 1992, such as the Education Act 1993 (DfE, 1993), which identified more powers over failing schools and the School Inspections Act 1996 (DfEE, 1996), which referred to ‘section 10 inspections’. The Education Act 2002 (DfES, 2002) included sections relating to school inspections, as did the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (DfES, 2006), which established the inspections of local education authorities, amongst other initiatives. These acts did not include any legislation that had an impact on the way inspectors evaluated teaching and so have not been included.

The 1944 Education Act

The 1944 Education Act (Board of Education, BOE, 1944), which was introduced nearly fifty years before the introduction of Ofsted, is included here because of what Batterson (1999: 5) described as ‘a highly significant moment in education history’. Rab Butler, who was the main architect of the act, is quoted by Barber (2014) as saying: ‘It [the 1944 Act] completely recasts the whole law as it affects education’. The 1944 Education Act, or Butler Act as it is often known (Batterson, 1999: 5, quoting from Howard, 1987: 139), established the notion of separate primary and secondary phases of education, roles and responsibilities of local education authorities, and a Ministry for education, amongst many other initiatives (Simon, 1999). Less noteworthy, but more relevant to this research, is legislation relating to the inspection of educational establishments, which was included as part of the miscellaneous provisions. Section 77 of the 1944 Education Act specified that educational establishments, including schools, would be inspected:

It shall be the duty of the Minister to cause inspections to be made of every educational establishment at such intervals as appear to him to be appropriate, and to cause a special inspection of any such establishment to be made whenever he considers such an inspection to be desirable; and for the purpose of enabling such inspections to be made on behalf of the Minister, inspectors may be appointed by His Majesty on the recommendation of the Minister, and persons may be authorised by the Minister to assist such inspectors and to act as additional inspectors.
(BOE, 1944: 56-57)

The Act defines ‘additional inspectors’; a term which has been used ever since to refer to inspectors who undertake inspections for Ofsted but are not HMI. The 1944 Act also gave local education authorities the mandate to inspect their own schools using their officers. There is no detail in the Act which might shed light on what criteria inspectors, either local authority or HMI, would be expected to use during the inspections. By opening the door to a wider group of people who would be

inspecting schools and judging the quality of teaching, hindsight suggests that such criteria would have been all the more necessary. Dunford (1998:112) describes it as 'surprising' that the inspection of schools by HMI changed little between 1944 and 1991. The 1944 Education Act (BOE, 1944) does not seem to have had much impact on how inspections were carried out and how teaching was judged, according to Dunford (1998).

The literature that comments on the 1944 Education Act, for example, Ozga (2000:118-121), Batteson (1999) and Simon (1986), has focused, unsurprisingly given their significance, on the main changes introduced by the Act, such as the tripartite system of secondary education. Scant attention has been paid to the inspections component of the Act.

The period between 1944 and 1988

None of the education acts in the period 1944 to 1988 referred to the inspection of schools. There were, though, reports and events during this period that may have had a bearing on future Ofsted criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching. For example, the Plowden Report (DES, 1967) focussed on primary education and was written in a context described by Shaw (1999: 7) as one of a 'liberal view of education and society'. Shaw (ibid) continues that the report promoted the notion of child-centred education, encapsulated in the phrase 'at the heart of the educational process lies the child'. Of particular relevance to this research is the report's (DES, 1967: 9) advocacy of differentiation: 'individual differences between children of the same age are so great that any class ... must always be treated as a body of children needing individual and different attention'. Differentiation has been included in each of Ofsted's criteria for the quality of teaching since 1993. For example, the first framework for inspection (Ofsted, 1993: 27) included an expectation that inspectors would include an evaluation of 'the degree to which work is matched to pupils' attainments and abilities'.

The Plowden Report (DES, 1967) also promoted opportunities for less privileged children. This goal features in all of the recent Ofsted criteria. For example, inspection guidance (Ofsted, 2012b: 34) refers to different groups of pupils in the grade descriptor for 'good' teaching (see appendix 6 for the grade descriptors) and pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium⁸ could be considered as less privileged. Inspectors are expected to comment when observing lessons on how pupils from different groups in the school are learning and making progress. By 'different groups' is meant: boys, girls, minority ethnic groups, those who speak English as an additional language, those who are disabled or with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium. The list of groups changed in 2014 to include the 'most able' (Ofsted, 2014a).

The notion of experiential learning advocated by Plowden (DES, 1967) is less clearly expressed in Ofsted criteria, but could be inferred from the expression in recent frameworks (for example, Ofsted, 2012a:34; 2014a: 61) 'pupils are interested and engaged' and from the increasing reference in Ofsted criteria especially since 2005, to pupils' active involvement in their own assessment. Both of these references suggest that pupils are active rather than passive learners. However, the importance of pupils being active seems to have been undermined by Sir Michael Wilshaw's insistence in 2014 that Ofsted does not have a preferred approach to teaching and that there is nothing wrong with pupils being 'passive learners' as guidance from Tribal explained:

It is unrealistic, too, for inspectors to necessarily expect that all work in all lessons is always matched to the specific needs of each individual. Do not expect to see 'independent learning' in all lessons and do not make the assumption that this is always necessary or desirable. On occasions, too, pupils are rightly passive rather than active recipients of learning. Do not criticise 'passivity' as a matter of course and certainly not unless it is

⁸ The pupil premium is the name given to extra government funds given to schools for each pupil who is eligible for free school meals, or has been eligible in the past six years, or who is looked after by the local authority, or who has a parent in one of the armed forces. The pupil premium was introduced in England by the Coalition Government in 2011.

evidently stopping pupils from learning new knowledge or gaining skills and understanding. (Tribal, 2014a)

The quote above also refers to differentiation, with the not unreasonable advice that inspectors should not expect this to occur in every lesson. The other aspect of learning which eventually became a banned phrase is 'independent learning', as inspectors were instructed by Tribal in January 2014:

Please consider the use of the phrase 'independent learning' or similar phrases as banned with immediate effect i.e. they should not be used under any circumstances. (Tribal, 2014b)

This intervention by an HMCI in relation to teaching criteria and what inspectors look for, as described above, is unprecedented in the history of Ofsted, in my experience. It marks a radical change to how the inspection criteria for teaching are used, particularly after September 2014 when inspectors also stopped giving teaching grades when they observed lessons (Ofsted, 2014d). The changes to the inspection criteria are explored further in Section 2.4.

In response to a recommendation in the Plowden Report (DES, 1967), HMI undertook a number of surveys of primary education between 1975 and 1985. The HMI survey of over 500 primary schools between 1975 and 1978 (DES, 1978:26-27) found that less than 5 % of teachers employed mainly the exploratory approach recommended by Plowden. The survey report defined a didactic approach, which it found that over three-quarter of teachers used, as one in which the teacher directed the children's work. An exploratory approach was said to be one where children found their own solutions to problems. It is not clear whether HMI endorsed the findings of the Plowden Report when making their evaluations of teaching during this period in history, although Dunford (1998) records that HMI were consulted during the preparation of the report. The Plowden Report was not without its critics. Kogan (1987) describes how the fundamental assumptions of the report were vigorously challenged and led to the Black papers (see section 2.2).

The 1988 Education Reform Act

The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) (DES, 1988) has been described as very influential and often compared to the 1944 Act (BOE, 1944) in terms of its significance (Evans and Penney, 1994; Glennister, 1991; Maclure, 1988; McLean, 1989; Simon, 1991; Taylor, 1993). McLean (1989: 233) described ERA as the most radical educational reform in Britain this century'. Lowe (2007:3) referred to the Act as 'draconian' because of the significance of the changes for the teaching profession, not least being much greater accountability and central control over what happens in the classroom. Glennister (1991: 1268) observed that ERA 'marked a decisive break in the tradition of administering education policy in the United Kingdom'. Kenneth Baker, who was Secretary of State at the time and the architect of the Education Reform Bill that became the 1988 Education Act, describes the genesis of the bill, the outcomes of which reflected his 'two watchwords: standards and choice' (Baker, 1993: 165). The major changes introduced by ERA include: The National Curriculum; local management of schools; grant maintained schools; city technology colleges; the National College for School Leadership; the Training and Development Agency; and the abolition of the Inner London Education Authority. Whitty (2000) describes how the Conservative government tried to break the LEA monopoly and give more choice to parents and autonomy for schools. At the same time there was more accountability through central control by, for example, the National Curriculum and national tests (which came to be known as SATs) for 7, 11 and 14 year-olds. HMI played a big part in helping to formulate the curriculum, as I can attest from personal experience.

The 1988 Education Act (DES, 1988) says little about inspection and nothing about inspection criteria, although Dunford (1998) noted that it gave local education authorities increased responsibility to monitor their schools. Dunford (1998) continues that not all LEAs were ready to carry out inspections, as they had retained an advisory role and had little experience of inspection. He adds (Dunford,

1998:120) that LEAs 'did not address the issue of criteria for inspection'. Dunford comments that Kenneth Baker encouraged cooperation between LEAs and HMI and I was part of a pilot joint LEA-HMI inspection of a school in Hillingdon, prior to my appointment as an HMI a year later. Dunford (1998: 202) suggests ERA 'forced a debate about the nature of inspection', which eventually led to Kenneth Clarke's 1991 Education Bill that became the 1992 Education (schools) Act (DES, 1992), which established Ofsted.

The introduction of a National Curriculum impacted on how inspectors observed lessons. The attainment targets and programmes of study for subjects helped to set standards by which inspectors would judge lessons. The first Inspection Handbook (Ofsted, 1993: 22- 23) instructed inspectors to inspect National Curriculum subjects based on a 'detailed knowledge' of the programmes of study, attainment targets and end of key stage statements. The Handbook provided guidance on what to look for in each of the National Curriculum subjects (HOC, 2009), contained in a large A4-sized ring binder. Inspectors were encouraged, through training, to write references to the National Curriculum levels on the lesson observation forms that were introduced with Ofsted inspections in order to provide consistency (see appendix 8). Commercial companies produced smaller versions of the National Curriculum programmes of study and attainment targets, which inspectors could carry around and use in lessons.

Barker (2008) refers to the shock experienced as the world woke up to the implications of the ERA, and how education had become a world-wide commodity and a measure of economic productivity and progress. Simkins (2000:317) describes the experience of schools since ERA as a 'roller-coaster of policy changes...driven by a clear underlying rationale: to create a policy framework that will provide an imperative for schools and colleges to respond to the improvement agenda of both Labour and Conservative Governments'. Inspections and, as we shall see, Ofsted, became an increasingly important part of the improvement agenda and have remained so to this day under the Coalition Government (2010 to 2015) and the Conservative administration elected in May 2015.

The 1992 Education Act

The Education (Schools) Act 1992 (DES, 1992) established the OHMCI, later called Ofsted, as an independent, non-ministerial department. As discussed in section 2.2, one of the amendments that was made to the Act, much to the disapproval of Baroness Blatch⁹ according to Thomas (1998), was the removal of the notion that governing bodies would choose their own inspection teams from a list approved by HMI. Thomas quotes Baroness Blatch as saying:

The amendment seeks to tear the heart out of the Bill by substituting a centralised regime in place of a system based upon choices by governing bodies. (Thomas, 1998: 424 quoting from Hansard/Lords, 1992b: 662–63).

Even with this amendment, the Act was unpopular. Prior to 1992, HMI had been led by a Senior Chief Inspector (SCI), located within the Department for Education and Science. SCIs reported directly to the Secretary of State. Dunford (1998) describes some of the tensions between HMI and the Department, in terms of the degree of independence that HMI enjoyed and the need to be accountable to the Department. This tension increased, according to Dunford (1998:168) as education became 'more politicised' in the Thatcher years. The SCIs reported findings based on inspection evidence and rarely based on their own personal views or ideology. HMI had to be wary of directly criticising government policy. Bolton (1998: 54- 55) describes how this changed under Ofsted and particularly under the second HMCI, Chris Woodhead, whom Bolton describes, without naming him, as 'out of control' and 'expressing his own views on important matters'. It is not clear whether Chris Woodhead had much influence on the inspection criteria. This detail is not directly related to the inspection criteria, but highlights the context in which the inspection framework was written and the much wider public accountability and interest in school inspections following the 1992 Education Act.

⁹ Baroness Emily Blatch (1937 – 2005) was a Conservative peer and Minister of State for education from 1991 to 1994.

The 1992 Act (DES, 1992, Chapter 8) specified the role of HMCI and how inspections would be carried out by registered inspectors, who would tender for the work. Inspections were prescribed in Section 9 of the Act and became known as 'section 9 inspections'. The registered inspector was charged with reporting (DES, 1992, Chapter 8:6) on: '(a) the quality of the education provided by the school; (b) the educational standards achieved in the school; (c) whether the financial resources made available to the school are managed efficiently; and (d) the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school'. These four major reporting requirements have hardly changed in the 20 years that Ofsted has been in existence. There were some additions in 2005, in response to the Labour Government initiatives, notably *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2004). Appendix 5 shows how the areas that had to be evaluated and reported changed over the years.

In relation to this research, the quality of teaching has been included variously under 'quality of education', 'provision' or since 2012 as a heading in its own right (Ofsted, 2012a). The 1992 Act (DES, 1992) charged HMCI with the duty to provide guidance to inspectors 'on the inspections of schools in England'. Teams of HMI have prepared guidance for each iteration of the inspection framework. The criteria for inspectors to use when observing lessons and judging teaching are set out in these handbooks, which became extremely necessary given the large number of inspectors (nearly 2000 at one time), including lay inspectors. Lee and Fitz (1997:49) describe the first Ofsted handbook of guidance for inspectors (which is now out of print) as:

The result of HMI's collective wisdom...[which]...provides in its sections on the quality of teaching and learning, a working definition of pedagogy. the manual represented not merely the advice and instruction on how to inspect, but an HMI view of what a good lesson, a good teacher and a good school are.

The guidance did not define the criteria for each of the five grades awarded ¹⁰ (see Table 2.1), but did give examples of good practice, drawn initially from HMI's shared understanding about good teaching and learning. Woodhead (2002: 109-110) describes how headteachers were complimentary about the early versions of the Handbook for Inspection and he quotes a headteacher who describes it as 'one of the best official educational publications of the last decade'. The headteacher appreciated having criteria by which inspectors would judge lessons and other aspects of the school.

In 1992, the Secretary of State for Education, Kenneth Clarke, commissioned a review of primary education, which resulted in 'Three Wise Men Report' (Alexander et al, 1992) as it was popularly known, because of its authors Robin Alexander, Jim Rose and Chris Woodhead. The report was highly critical of primary education and advocated the need for more in-service training for teachers in literacy and numeracy.

For the purposes of this research, the Education Act 1993 (DfE, 1993), Education Act 1994 (DfE, 1994) and Schools Inspection Act 1996 (DfEE, 1996), are not discussed because, although they included references to HMCI and inspection practice, including a change to 'section 10' under which inspections were undertaken (DfEE, 1996), they did not introduce any direct implications for inspection criteria. The inspection criteria changed very little until 2005, as discussed in the next section.

1997 to 2010

A change of government in 1997 heralded a new era in which the Labour Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is often quoted as saying prior to his election victory that his three main priorities for government were 'education, education, education' (Blair, 1996). Ball (2008:93) comments on the plethora of education policies introduced by New Labour, although much of the pre-1997 Conservative policies were retained

¹⁰ There were initially five different grades, which changed to seven in 1996.

and in several instances further developed, for example, with 'standards and targets and performance monitoring ... given a sharper edge'. Spending increased significantly. Ball (2008) adds that a number of key Conservative appointments, including HMCI Chris Woodhead, were retained in post. The retention of Chris Woodhead was a surprise given HMCI's unpopularity and Conservative views. However, Ball (2008:87) quotes a comment by Novak in a pamphlet for the Institute of Economic Affairs that 'the triumph of Tony Blair may in one sense be regarded as the triumph of Margaret Thatcher'.

In 1996, prior to winning the election, Tony Blair made a speech at Ruskin College, Oxford, in which he referred to that of his predecessor James Callaghan's speech some 20 years earlier. In his speech Blair (1996) made it clear that he intended to improve standards of literacy and numeracy in primary schools. This pledge came to fruition through the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies which were introduced in 1998 and 1999, respectively, by the Labour Government (see Ofsted, 2002a; 2002b; DfE, 2011d, for reports on the Strategies). Although the National Strategies were non-statutory, many schools and inspectors seemed to believe that they were (Eason, 2009). These strategies were described as 'ambitious reform agenda' (Leithwood et al, 2004: 57), with prescriptive frameworks described by English et al (2002: 25) as 'confusing'. The Ofsted reports on the strategies (for example, Ofsted, 2002a; 2002b) were generally very positive. Machin and McNally (2004: 3) analysed pupils' reading data and conclude that the 'literacy hour works'. Webb and Vulliamy (2007: 561) undertook a review of the impact of the strategies and came to the conclusion that they have:

given rise to more change (sic) in teaching approaches at KS2 than in the previous two decades. They have led to the implementation of whole class teaching, the use of learning objectives and changes in seating arrangements not only in literacy and mathematics lessons, but also across the primary curriculum.

This view suggests that the National Strategies had more impact on teaching methods in primary schools than any guidance or criteria provided by Ofsted. The introduction of the National Strategies had an impact on inspections. The handbook for inspections of primary and nursery schools (Ofsted, 2000a: 46) included the instruction that inspectors 'must' evaluate 'how well literacy and numeracy are taught'. This requirement did not appear in earlier versions of the inspection framework. In 2000, HMI produced an additional guidance document entitled *Inspecting Subjects 3-11* (Ofsted, 2000d), which provided suggestions for how to inspect each National Curriculum subject. It is interesting to note that in the section on the inspection of English (Ofsted, 2000d:19-26), inspectors are told that most schools will have adopted the National Literacy Strategy (NLS), but that it is not a statutory requirement. However, inspectors had to explain why a school had not adopted the NLS if its standards were not high. In addition, there is a reference later in the same section on observation of a 'literacy hour', which was an essential part of the NLS; this advice could have given inspectors conflicting messages.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (DFEE, 1998) and the Education Act 2002 (DfES, 2002) included many changes for schools and local authorities and some implications for the inspection framework, including the explicit inspection of leadership for the first time. There was nothing that had a bearing on how inspectors would evaluate the quality of teaching.

The murder of the teenager Stephen Lawrence in 1993 and subsequent report by Sir William MacPherson (1999) was an example of political influence on the way schools are inspected. The report included a recommendation that Ofsted school inspections include examination of the recommended strategies, such as records of racist incidents. Immediately after the report was published, Ofsted produced a training programme on educational inclusion (Ofsted, 2000b), which was compulsory for all inspectors. The training focused on all areas of discrimination and led to an expectation that inspectors would report on the achievements and progress of different groups of learners (such as those with special educational needs, those who are disabled, those from minority ethnic groups, or who speak

English as an additional language, those eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority) when observing lessons and that this would be included in the inspection reports.

Impact of the Education Act 2005

By 2005, Ofsted had taken over a number of other services and became known as the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. The 2005 inspection framework (Ofsted, 2005a) presented a radical change to the way schools were inspected. The inspection of schools was set out in section 5 of the Education Act (DfES, 2005), and thereafter, these Ofsted inspections were referred to as section 5 inspections. Section 8 inspections are follow-up monitoring visits to schools causing concern, which were reclassified as either requiring special measures or a notice to improve¹¹, the latter being where there are serious weaknesses, but the leadership of the school is judged to have the capacity to bring about improvement.

From 2005, schools were given less notice of an inspection, inspectors spent less time (usually two days) in school and there was a greater focus on schools' own self-evaluation. The grading scale changed from seven to four points (see Table 2.1), where: grade 1=outstanding; grade 2=good; grade 3= satisfactory; grade 4= inadequate. All of this had implications for how inspectors judged the quality of teaching in lessons. The inspection guidance (Ofsted, 2005a) referred to the five *Every Child Matters* areas¹² (DfES, 2004), but inspectors were not expected to grade each of these until the 2009 inspection framework. This increasing list of what inspectors had to evaluate within a shorter timescale may have led to what Perry (2008) referred to as tick box inspection. It also meant that the judgement on the quality of teaching was not very prominent as it was included as part of four areas under the 'quality of provision' (Ofsted, 2005a).

¹¹ Notice to improve category was changed back to 'serious weaknesses' in 2012.

¹² The ECM areas are: Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning; the extent to which pupils feel safe; the extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles; the extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community; and the extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being).

Another significant change brought about by the 2005 inspection framework (Ofsted, 2005a) was the recommendation that inspectors should undertake some lesson observations alongside headteachers or other senior school staff, in order to form a judgement about the accuracy of their evaluations of teaching. Inspectors were also urged to evaluate teaching using a wide evidence base, such as looking at pupils' written work, talking to pupils and from a school's own monitoring of lessons, and not just on the proportion of good or better lessons seen.

The greater focus on inspectors looking at schools' self-evaluation (Barber, 2004) was not without its critics (for example, Humphreys, 1994). Maguire et al (2011:5), sought to identify some 'ordinary schools', without success, highlighting the current neo-liberal climate in which schools' fabrication and performativity impact on their self-evaluation to 'militate against any more critical appraisal of a school's strengths and weaknesses'. Because of the high stakes of inspection outcomes, the authors suggest that schools are often driven to put a positive spin on their self-evaluation.

2010 to 2015

In May 2010, a new Coalition Government (Conservative and Liberal Democrats) came to power and immediately set about changing much of what had been introduced by the previous Labour Governments. For example, the name of the Department was changed overnight from the Department for Children, Schools and Families to the Department for Education. References to *Every Child Matters* were removed from Department literature. The new Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, quickly set about introducing some radical changes in the White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE, 2010a), which culminated in the Education Act 2011 (DfE, 2011b). This Act was controversial in many ways because it resulted in the abolition of: The General Teaching Council; the Training and Development Agency; the Support Staff Negotiating Body; and the need for local authorities to appoint school improvement partners for each school (DfE,

2011c). Ball (2011) describes much of the Act's implications and the proposed new National Curriculum, as returning education in England to what it was like in the nineteenth century, with, for example, an emphasis on facts and rote learning.

The 2011 Education Act (DFE, 2011b) included some significant implications for inspections. A new framework was introduced in January 2012, with compulsory training for inspectors. The Act described certain schools as being 'exempt' from being inspected, if they had been judged outstanding. The areas to be inspected were reduced to four: achievement of pupils; quality of teaching; behaviour and safety of pupils; and the quality of the leadership in and management. The revised guidance for inspectors (Ofsted 2012a) set out in detail the criteria for the quality of teaching. Before inspectors had time to get used to this new and simpler framework for inspections, the appointment of HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw resulted in another inspection framework from September 2012 (Ofsted, 2012b). This entailed further compulsory training for inspectors. This new HMCI consulted widely on some radical changes, which were brought in, with only minor modifications. These changes included: much shorter notice before an inspection; reversion to 'significant weaknesses' instead of 'notice to improve'; and the expression 'requires improvement' replacing 'satisfactory' as a judgement for grade '3' (Ofsted, 2012c).

Much of the former practice of lesson observations remained in the 2012 frameworks, such as joint observations with senior school staff. Inspectors were expected to observe a senior manager feeding back to a teacher following a joint lesson observation. Inspectors were encouraged to judge the quality of teaching 'over time' (in other words, as typical practice) and not to rely simply on lessons seen during the inspection. The phrase 'over time' occurs 24 times in the 2014 inspection handbook (Ofsted, 2014a). Inspectors are expected to draw on a wide range of evidence to support the judgement on teaching over time, including: the school's own monitoring data; pupils' work; talking to pupils and teachers; teachers' plans; and pupils' progress. The time span over which inspectors are expected to note is generally taken as three years, though this is not very clear.

The September 2012 Handbook (Ofsted 2012b) included a revised set of criteria, including that for good teaching, which differed slightly from the January version of the criteria. The political impact on the criteria is evident in the first bullet point of the September 2012 Ofsted criteria for teaching (Ofsted, 2012b), which refers to the 'pupil premium'. The pupil premium was an initiative advocated by the Liberal Democrats and introduced by the new Government (DfE, 2010b) to provide extra money for each child who is eligible for free school meals, or who is looked after or who is the child of a parent in one of the armed services. Sir Michael Wilshaw has made his views very plain in terms of the need to raise standards for those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, for example, in the report on Unseen Children (Ofsted, 2013b). Inspectors are directed to record evidence of how well different groups of pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium, are learning in lessons, which is a tall order in a 20 or 25-minute observation (which is all that inspectors can spend due to the pressures on their time during an inspection). The expectations on inspectors have increased, whilst the time allowed to do the work and to do justice to teachers and schools has decreased.

Michael Gove, affirmed his belief in inspection in a speech in January 2013 (Gove, 2013), in which he said, 'I am a passionate believer in the power of good inspection to improve education' and 'Inspection can be a catalyst for rapid and effective school improvement'. The reference to a 'good' inspection implies that not all inspections are good. He gives some reasons why inspections were not always good enough in the past: 'Too few inspectors had recent - or current - experience of teaching'; there were too many criteria prior to 2010 (27 to be graded), which put teaching on a par with 'adopting healthy lifestyles'. Gove also commented on the lack of clarity in the teaching criteria which he said were too open to inspectors' 'personal prejudices and preferences'. He identified examples of these personal preferences, such as group work and 'discovery learning' and criticising teachers for 'talking too much'; all of these points have been taken on board by HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw. Gove appointed Sir Michael Wilshaw as head of Ofsted in 2012 and described his leadership as 'inspirational' in September 2013. Shortly

afterwards in January 2014, a widely-reported rift between Gove and Wilshaw led to the latter 'spitting blood' (BBC, 2014) over anti-Ofsted rhetoric from two right wing think tanks, Policy Exchange and Civitas¹³. The BBC reports Sir Michael as saying that he suspected the think tanks were being 'informed by the Department for Education' and that he was 'displeased, shocked and outraged'. The think tank criticisms of Ofsted were wide-ranging. In relation to the quality of teaching, the BBC (2014) reported that Civitas suggested that teachers were being held back by inspectors' child-centred views and reported the Policy Exchange as saying that inspection judgements were inconsistent and that the current inspection regime placed excessive pressure on teachers. Waterman (2014) described the Policy Exchange report (Waldegrave and Simons, 2014) as 'pretty limp' after the heated exchange between Wilshaw and Gove.

The Civitas report (Peal, 2014) is very critical of inspection, Sir Michael Wilshaw and the government. Its main thesis about inspection is that inspectors' judgements are too subjective and that inspectors have a preference for child-led teaching approaches and penalise schools that do not conform to these. The report argues that despite the Ofsted guidance that bans certain phrases as described previously, inspectors still insist in perpetuating the child-centred ideology by using the banned phrases. Peal (2014:6) describes Ofsted as the 'chief arbiter of what constitutes 'good practice' in the classroom' with the result that 'Ofsted has been able to alter the whole culture of the teaching profession'. The report mainly focuses on the impact on secondary schools and fails to recognise its own internal contradiction, when it comments that in '97% of cases the teaching grade matches the achievement grade', which suggests to me that the teaching grades do not necessarily reflect judgements about teaching style but are more to do with the impact on pupils' attainment and progress (data). Nevertheless, there are some relevant points in the report such as schools trying to second-guess what they think inspectors want to see and the money-making industry that has arisen out of teaching the 'perfect Ofsted lesson'. The report suggests that a significant part of the problem is the use by Ofsted of awarding grades for teaching in lessons; a

¹³ Civitas is a right-wing think tank that describes itself as 'The Institute For The Study Of Civil Society': www.civitas.org.uk

criticism that Wilshaw has responded to and the practice ceased in September 2014. The report concludes that 'a whole industry has grown up around the Ofsted style of teaching, and to overturn it will require far more strenuous action than is currently being taken'. It appears that Ofsted has responded to the political pressure and criticism from these think tanks, but this might be a reflection of Wilshaw's personal views rather than or as well as a response to criticism.

Ofsted has always claimed its independence from government. The reality suggests otherwise, as Ofsted chief inspectors have tended to be political appointments and their philosophies have been significant in driving changes. Baxter (2014: 22) refers to the paradox of Ofsted and quotes from Clarke (2008) 'the paradox of independence': the extent to which the regulatory body can be said to be impartial, as Ofsted describes it, 'to inspect without fear or favour'. Can a regulatory body such as Ofsted be truly independent from the government, which sets its agenda?

The government's influence on the criteria for teaching has not been very marked, but the way that inspectors judge teaching has changed significantly since 1993. Baxter (2014) discusses the changes since 2012 when Sir Michael Wilshaw took over as HMCI. Despite there being a much simpler inspection framework, Baxter suggests that this has complicated rather than clarified Ofsted's role and concludes:

Ofsted's ability to survive so far has in part been due to its capacity to reinvent itself: to align its structure and climate to the political backdrop against which it operates, yet simultaneously creating a discourse of inspection which places the agency at a respectable distance from its political masters. In order to continue to do so it may need to re-define its function within the current education landscape in order to prevent the Janus-like approach of the 2012 Framework with its fuzzy boundaries between development and regulation from compromising its capacity as an instrument by which to govern education in England. (Baxter, 2014:35).

Baxter (2014) questions whether Ofsted can survive. Ofsted has reinvented itself again by the production of yet another new framework for September 2015, which will be the twelfth since 1993, with a simpler approach for 'good' schools. The focus on teaching has increased since 2012, reflecting the Coalition Government's policy on 'the importance of teaching' (DfE, 2010a). The synergy with Secretary of State Michael Gove's preference for a return to traditional didactic modes of teaching is evident. Ofsted's dilemma is how to evaluate teaching without telling schools what is good practice. Prior to 2012, Ofsted provided criteria backed up with a range of published guidance that indicated what was considered good practice. That no longer happens. If teaching is judged mainly in terms of its impact on pupils' achievements, then why observe lessons at all? – a suggestion proposed by Waldegrave and Simons (2014) and Peal (2014). As long as Ofsted includes observations of lessons and criteria for teaching that goes beyond its impact on progress, it is likely that schools will try to put on a show when being observed.

2.4 Ofsted's criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching

This section of the literature review focusses directly on Ofsted's teaching criteria. There is relatively little literature specifically about the criteria so the emphasis here is on the language and content of the criteria themselves and how they have changed between 1993 and July 2015. There have been 11 versions of Ofsted's framework for inspection in this time, with accompanying guidance and several amendments in between. Since January 2012 there have been four different handbooks with a further version for September 2015. The political influences on the framework and criteria were discussed in sections 2.2 and 2.3. In this section I have considered other possible influences on the criteria such as educational research.

The criteria

The word criterion can be defined as a 'test, principle, rule, canon, or standard, by which anything is judged or estimated' or 'a distinguishing mark or characteristic attaching to a thing, by which it can be judged or estimated' (OED, 2015) or as a 'standard by which you judge, decide about, or deal with something' (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Thesaurus, 2015).

Although this research is concerned with Ofsted's criteria, what exactly constitutes the 'criteria' is not clear. For example, the first handbook for inspection (Ofsted, 1993, amended in 1994, Ofsted, 1994a: 26) included an explicit list of 'evaluation criteria' as well as a list of 'additional evidence' such as 'teachers' records of work done by pupils and 'the nature and contribution of homework'. By 'additional', it meant, presumably, in addition to lesson observations. The 1994 Ofsted handbook (Ofsted, 1994a) stated what the report on teaching should include, which comprised five points: quality of teaching and its impact on learning and standards; effectiveness of lesson planning; teachers' subject knowledge; match of work to pupils' attainment and abilities and whether teachers' expectations are appropriately high' (Ofsted, 1994:26). There was a five-point grading scale and the handbook included very broad descriptors for the grades, such as '1' – 'many good features, some of them outstanding and '5' many shortcomings.'

Prior to 2012, Ofsted has never articulated the theoretical basis for its choice of teaching criteria. The 2012 inspection handbook (Ofsted, 2012a) explicitly stated a link to the government's *Teachers Standards* (DfE, 2011a). Before then the criteria were presented with little explanation, though the implication was that they were based on HMIs' observations in the field of what constitutes good practice (Lee and Fitz, 1997; Matthews and Sammons, 2004: 21-22). HMI included examples of what they considered good teaching in guides such as *Curriculum Matters* (for example, DES, 1985). The lack of justification for the criteria or acknowledgement of research into effective teaching reflect a general lack of criticism of the Ofsted criteria, as noted by Gilroy and Wilcox (1997), though there have been some exceptions.

Thornley (2007:1), who is a former headteacher and HMI of schools, challenges readers to consider whether schools and Ofsted are 'weighing the right pig', by which he means are inspectors inspecting what is really most important and, by inference, applying the right criteria? Thornley (2007) goes on to present his view of what good and outstanding lessons would look like, extrapolating from the Ofsted criteria; he does not suggest that Ofsted have got it wrong.

Gilroy and Wilcox (1997: 28-32) challenge the general acceptance by schools of the criteria and their validity. They apply Wittgensteinian principles to the meaning of 'criterion' and how it is interpreted by Ofsted. Gilroy and Wilcox (1997) identify three types of criteria, drawing on Wittgenstein's analysis of the social context of language. Their three interpretations of criteria are: Definitional – these are criteria where the definition is unambiguous and clearly understood; Factual – based on empirical facts and which can be open to scientific challenge and interpretation; Conventional – criteria agreed by convention and general usage, which can change over time. Gilroy and Wilcox (1997) suggest that Ofsted uses criteria in different ways. Sometimes they are 'factual', with, for example, a judgement as to whether attendance is above or below 90%, which is a factual statement and not open to interpretation. Other criteria, they state, are more conventional in type, although Ofsted appears to describe them as if they are factual or definitional. The example that Gilroy and Wilcox give is of 'attitude', which inspectors are expected to judge and which the guidance seeks to describe in terms such as pupils' perseverance and confidence, which Gilroy and Wilcox argue are not unambiguous and need further definition and explanation. They also criticise Ofsted's use of the term 'effectively' (Gilroy and Wilcox, 1997: 32), which they say is not defined and is linked to other criteria that are not defined, leading to an 'infinite regress of explanation'. The term 'effectively' is used a great deal in Ofsted criteria and guidance. For example, in a more recent version of the handbook (Ofsted 2013h), 'effectively' is used 13 times, including twice in the criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching.

Gilroy and Wilcox (1997) suggest that because of the ambiguity of the criteria they are open to different interpretations by inspectors, particularly those who have not been part of the HMI 'interpretative community' (Fish, 1980). Inspectors, they say, have to rely a lot on their subjective judgements. Ofsted has always indicated that inspectors have to 'use their professional judgement to evaluate what they observe' (for example, Ofsted, 2005b: 2). Ofsted's subsidiary guidance (Ofsted, 2014g) includes 12 references to inspectors having to use their 'professional judgement' to interpret evidence.

Gaertner and Pant (2011: 85-93) examine the validity of school inspection's using Messick's (1995) validity concept, which employs six measures: content; structure; substance; generalizability; externality; and consequential. They find that applying Messick's concept to the validity of school inspections (and by implication the criteria that inspectors use) 'uncovered several unresolved questions about the soundness of inspectors' evaluation of ...quality'. Gaertner and Pant (2011) note the contrast between their negative findings about validity with the importance attached to the outcomes of inspections as tools for school improvement.

Colin Richards, a former senior HMI, has been a constant critic of Ofsted since he left in 1996. Richards (2001: 658) has challenged the 'language of inspection' and how it is open to different interpretation. He illustrated his argument by reference to a criterion for the quality of teaching that includes the expectation that inspectors should judge how well teachers 'challenge' pupils. The theme of 'challenge' has been a part of the criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching in most versions of the Ofsted handbook (for example, Ofsted, 1994a: 26; 2005b: 8; 2012a: 11).

Richards (2001) argues that the word 'challenge' is open to numerous interpretations by inspectors, depending on their experience and understanding, and that pupils may also perceive challenge in very different ways. He continues by noting that the use of everyday language by inspectors, which he says is encouraged to make the reports accessible to parents, is not as helpful as it sounds because of the different ways in which common language can be interpreted. Inspectors are increasingly expected to write in simple terms and to

avoid 'jargon' such as the word 'differentiation' and even 'curriculum' (see guidance for inspectors on writing reports, Ofsted, 2013i).

The Ofsted frameworks and handbooks for inspection

Ofsted inspections began in 1993 for secondary schools and the following year for primary and special schools. The first Ofsted inspection framework and handbook (Ofsted, 1993) were received positively by schools, as indicated earlier. Matthews and Sammons (2004), reported that:

The guidance broke radically new ground. They set out, for the first time, the basis on which inspections were conducted by revealing the criteria, methods and principles underpinning inspectors' judgements. The impact and professional relevance of the 1993 school inspection handbook was such that the Secondary Headteachers' Association described it as 'the best book on school management that has ever appeared from official sources. It is a well-polished mirror in which to reflect – and reflect on – the performance and procedures of all areas of school life.' (Matthews and Sammons (2004: 21)

The positive reception of the handbook may reflect the lack of such guidance before that time. However, not everyone was as positive about the handbook. Maw (1995) suggests that the handbook includes too many judgements, which would be difficult to undertake with any reliability and validity in the time available during an inspection. Maw (1995: 40) concludes that 'the search for control, with its fragmentation of evaluation into hundreds of specific criteria, is also counter-productive in that it mistakes the nature of professional judgement in education'. Although the handbook includes criteria to guide inspectors, much has to be left to the individual's professional judgement (as discussed on page 67).

The framework for inspection has been revised many times with versions in 1993, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2009, January 2012, September 2012, 2013 and

2014 and a further change for September 2015. The frameworks set out the principles of inspection and how they will be carried out and reported. They are accompanied by more detailed guidance that helps inspectors to make their judgements on all aspects of a school (see appendix 5). The guidance has been variously called 'handbooks' or 'evaluation schedules' according, presumably, to the preference of the HMCI at the time. In the earliest versions of the framework, there was separate guidance for primary, secondary and special schools. Since 2005 there has been one generic guidance document with phase specific detail (for example, for the inspection of early years or sixth forms) appearing in subsidiary guidance.

The amount of guidance that appears after the publication of a new framework has increased significantly in recent years, with the Internet used to speed up the process. There have been so many changes that Ofsted summarised them (for example, Ofsted, 2012h), with 27 amendments to the inspection guidance and each of the changes had a hyperlink to a zip file containing a further 16 files with more guidance and instructions for inspectors. My experience as an inspector is that since September 2012 there has been an increase in the amount of additional guidance for inspectors, with weekly and sometimes bi-weekly updates from the inspection service providers (ISPs) such as Tribal and SERCO. The updates arose often because of feedback from Ofsted to the ISPs about the quality of inspection reports (Tribal, 2014b; SERCO, 2014). For example, an email sent from Tribal to lead inspectors in February 2015 said:

As you are aware Ofsted is sampling more reports at sign off than it has done for some time. While the vast majority of reports are successfully signed off first-time, unfortunately, a growing proportion, currently about one in every six reports, is returned to us as not meeting the required standard..... the number of exceptions¹⁴ has risen during the course of the academic year and especially in the last two months. (Tribal, 2015a).

¹⁴ By 'exceptions' is meant reports that Ofsted considered failed to meet their standard.

This email was saying that HMI in Ofsted read reports after they have gone through a quality assurance process by Tribal. Many of the reports are returned to Tribal because they are said not to meet the standard: aspects are missing and/or the report suggests a preferred teaching approach. An example of writing that was deemed inappropriate by HMI was: 'Well planned lessons start promptly and, proceeding at a speed that matches the content, students cover a lot of ground'. The HMI who reviewed the report considered that this underlined phrase suggested a preferred approach and asked for it to be removed before the report was published. It is not clear what is wrong with this phrase, but Ofsted's concerns about teachings styles could be linked to the criticism by Civitas (Peal, 2014:19) that Ofsted favours a child-centred approach to teaching and that this 'remains evident in recent inspection reports' (after Ofsted had instructed inspectors not to indicate a preferred approach). It is possibly no coincidence that the increase in guidance and specificity has coincided with the appointment of Sir Michael Wilshaw as HMCI after the Coalition Government came into power in 2010. It is clear from speeches he has made that he has led the drive about not promoting a particular teaching style (Wilshaw, 2014a) and for guidance to inspectors such as the following:

Do not use formulaic statements about teacher-talk dominating lessons, pupils moving to a wide range of activities, matching work to individual needs, or the lack of 'independent learning' and so on. (Ofsted, 2014c: 9).

Ofsted's criteria and guidance on inspecting teaching 1993 to 2003

Versions of the inspection handbook after 1993 included a list of what should be evaluated and reported (for example, Ofsted, 1995: 66-68), which changed slightly each time. There was no longer an explicit list of criteria in the 1995 handbook, although these are implied by statements about what inspectors' judgements should be based on. The amount of detail in these early handbooks was much greater than in later versions. It was fairly evident what Ofsted considered to be good teaching and learning, so that schools could draw on this when examining

their own practice. There was often supplementary guidance that described what good teaching looks like in different subjects. For example, *Inspecting Subjects 3-11* (Ofsted, 2000d) provided information on what inspectors should look for in lessons and gave examples of questions to ask pupils about different subjects. This document included examples of lessons for some of the Ofsted grades (Ofsted, 2000d: 37); for example, there was a $\frac{3}{4}$ page description of a mathematics lesson for Year 6 pupils, which was graded as 'teaching and learning very good (grade 2)', with a comment at the bottom to explain why it had been judged as very good.

What is significant about the early criteria, in comparison with changes introduced in 2014, is the explicit statement about what to look for in lessons. The 1994 guidance (Ofsted, 1994) included detailed descriptions of what inspectors should look for when observing lessons in each of the National Curriculum subjects. For example, inspectors were told when evaluating the quality of teaching in science (Ofsted, 1994a: 30) that 'appropriate choices should be made [by teachers] between individual, small group and whole class teaching according to the science being taught'.

It is not clear why the wording of the criteria changed in each of the early iterations of the handbook. Case et al (2000: 609) suggested that these revisions to the very early handbook tended to move the emphasis 'from a focus on pupils to a stronger scrutiny of teachers, i.e. from learning to teaching, harking back to the days of the Revised Code and to 'payment by results' in the nineteenth century'. This change, they assert was linked to the government initiative to link teachers' appraisal with pay. This focus on teaching was evident in the words of the criteria which described what good teaching should include. Examples of the teaching criteria are included in appendix 6 and the main features are summarised in appendix 7.

All of the inspection handbooks have been made available to schools and used by headteachers. Ball (1997: 332) observed how a secondary school planned to ensure that it met Ofsted's requirements: 'Ofsted expectations became a focus for

common interest within the school and a rationale for regular monitoring and checking of 'systems' and procedures'. Then, as now, school leaders became very familiar with the contents of the inspection handbooks and the criteria, in order to be prepared for an Ofsted inspection resulting in the performativity that is discussed in the next section.

In 2000, a new inspection framework and handbook (Ofsted, 2000a) introduced two sorts of inspection: short and full, where short inspections were for 'good' schools and took less time and did not report on different subjects, as was the practice in earlier frameworks. The areas that were reported on are shown in appendix 5. The guidance on inspecting teaching in this handbook (Ofsted, 2000a: 46-63) comprised 18 foolscap pages. It stated what had to be reported about teaching, how it should be inspected, and how judgements should be arrived at. It included examples of what constituted very good/ excellent teaching and satisfactory teaching. There were also extracts to illustrate different examples of teaching (for example, a Year 4 mathematics lesson where teaching was excellent). There was advice on how to make judgements on each of the nine aspects of teaching that inspectors 'should consider'. Reference is made to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies (Ofsted, 2002a; 2002b), which had been in place for three and two years respectively. The addition of a requirement for inspectors to consider whether teachers 'are technically competent in teaching phonics and other basic skills' (Ofsted, 2000a: 46) reflects the focus on literacy and numeracy.

The 2003 inspection handbook for primary schools (Ofsted, 2003) introduced another change – it no longer referred to short and full inspections. There were 11 aspects of teaching that inspectors had to assess 'the extent to which teachers...'. The aspects of teaching were similar to those in the 2000 handbook (Ofsted, 2000a) but the wording had changed again. The 2003 guidance on inspecting teaching (Ofsted, 2003: 60-75) included similar detail to that described above for 2000. In addition, there were descriptions for four of the seven grades at that time for teaching, compared with only two grade descriptors in 2000 (see appendix 6).

I have included considerable detail about the two inspection handbooks because I believe that the way that the nature and quantity of guidance on evaluating teaching changed over time and particularly more recently is significant. The constant changes to the wording, however minor, and the lack of explanation for them, have implications for inspectors and headteachers who have to understand and interpret them. This could illustrate what Maw referred to as Ofsted's 'control' (Maw, 1995) and Courtney's (2014) 'exercise of power' or Bourdieu's notion of 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) against schools and additional inspectors, which is discussed in the next chapter.

Annual reports and other guidance

In addition to inspection guidance in the handbooks, other Ofsted publications shed light on what Ofsted considered good teaching (Peal, 2014). Each year, Ofsted publishes an annual report, with a forward by HMCI. The annual reports provide a summary of evidence from all the inspections in the preceding year (for example, Ofsted, 1996a;1998; 2011b). These annual reports include descriptions of the summaries of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, identified through the inspections of thousands of schools. The early reports quoted statistics about the quality of teaching in lessons. For example:

The statistics this year speak for themselves. In 1993/94 the quality of teaching was judged to be less than satisfactory in 25 per cent, 30 per cent, 19 per cent and 17 per cent of lessons in Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. This year the comparable figures have fallen to 8 per cent, 8 per cent, 10 per cent and 7 per cent. Teaching is now deemed to be good in over half of the lessons observed in each key stage. Teachers are now expecting more of their pupils. They are planning and preparing more effectively and teaching in a more challenging, direct way. More headteachers (though not yet enough) are monitoring the quality of

teaching in their schools. More pupils, as a consequence, are achieving their potential.’ (Ofsted, 1998: 14)

The annual reports provided information for schools and teachers that helped to define what Ofsted considered to be best practice. For example, the 2003/4 annual report (Ofsted, 2004: 20-21) is very specific about the ‘need for pupils to be clear about what is expected of them’ and for them to have ‘opportunities to ask questions’. It suggests that pupils also learn best when they ‘work collaboratively’ and says that ‘teachers are starting to consider pupils’ preferred learning styles in line with the thrust of personalised learning’. These explicit references to teaching styles, including ‘learning styles’ whose validity has since been questioned (for example, Pashler et al, 2008; Sharp et al, 2008), is in sharp contrast with the current Ofsted edict that inspections should not advocate a particular teaching approach. This reference in 2004 to learning styles and personalised learning reflects the government’s National Strategies (reviewed in DfE, 2011c).

The amount of detail in the annual reports about teaching has varied, possibly dependent on the particular HMCI’s preference. The 2008 annual report (Ofsted, 2008: 29), under Christine Gilbert as HMCI, reported that: ‘The best teaching is based on stimulating interaction and engagement with pupils, well-considered choice of resources and secure subject knowledge on the part of teachers. Skilful questioning is used to monitor pupils’ understanding and to encourage them to deepen it through reflection, discussion and justification of their answers’. This is broad and generic, compared with the detailed comments in earlier annual reports and in a later version, the 2010/11 annual report (Ofsted, 2011b), when Miriam Rosen was acting HMCI, which goes into more detail about good and inadequate practice. For example,

Good-quality teaching depends on effectively planned lessons, the right mix of activities chosen to sustain pupils’ concentration and develop their understanding and the way in which lesson planning and execution are

consistently informed by high expectations of what all pupils can achieve.

(Ofsted, 2011b: 51)

As recently as 2012, Ofsted produced guidance on what inspectors look for when they undertake subject survey visits (for example, Ofsted, 2012g). These documents set out subject-specific descriptors for the quality of teaching for each of the four grades (for example, physical education, Ofsted, 2013g). There have been a number of Ofsted publications that outline good practice in mathematics and English (for example, Ofsted, 2012d; Ofsted, 2012e; 2013f). The apparent contradiction between Ofsted's publication of examples of good practice about teaching and the suggestion that it does not have a preferred teaching approach has not gone unnoticed, for example by Peal (2014).

Ofsted's annual reports include statistics about the proportion of teaching at the different inspection grades (such as good or outstanding). Ofsted inspectors have not given a grade for the overall lesson quality since 2009, but have graded teaching in lessons. The 2012/13 annual report stated that:

We judged teaching overall to be good or outstanding in 65% of schools we inspected this year, compared with 62% last year. We also observed the quality of teaching in individual lessons and found it to be good or outstanding in 71% of primary lessons and 69% of secondary lessons.

(Ofsted, 2013e: 12)

The distinction between judging the quality of a lesson and the quality of teaching in a lesson is, in my view and as observed by Waldegrave and Simons (2014: 22), very slim and may have been missed by schools and inspectors, resulting in Ofsted sending out a missive about it in 2014 (Ofsted, 2014d; 2014f).

Ofsted's criteria and guidance on inspecting teaching 2005 – 2011

The 2005 Ofsted framework (Ofsted, 2005a) included some significant changes to inspection, as described in the previous section. The aim of these changes was presumably to cut costs (Ofsted, 2006a:1) and to respond to some of the early criticisms of inspection (for example, Cullingford, 1999) and the need for inspections to take more heed of school self-evaluation (Chapman, 2002; HOC, 1999).

It is not clear why the grading scale went from seven to four in 2005. It does not appear to be linked to a change of HMCI or Secretary of State for Education. Ofsted's annual report for 2005/6 (Ofsted, 2006b:7) includes a forward by the incoming HMCI Christine Gilbert, which referred to the change of inspection framework and grading: 'The rigour of the new grade descriptors, and the data now available, mean that there is an ever more acute appraisal of pupils' progress and a school's performance'. The annual report does not elaborate on why changing the grading resulted in a more acute appraisal of a school's performance.

The inspection guidance (Ofsted, 2005b) for inspections from 2005 included for the first time descriptions for each of the four grades 1 to 4, for each aspect of a school that was reported on (see appendix 6). The components of the criteria for teaching in the 2005 handbook do not differ much from earlier criteria. The main difference is exemplified by the first sentence in the description for grade 2 (i.e. good) teaching: 'Learners make good progress¹⁵ and show good attitudes to their work, as a result of effective teaching' (Ofsted, 2005b: 8). This highlighted the requirement that from 2005 teaching was to be evaluated first and foremost in terms of the progress of learners. Although this was always an expectation in earlier frameworks, because the criteria focussed on qualities of teaching pedagogy, there was a temptation for inspectors and schools to use the Ofsted

¹⁵ Ofsted guidance in 2005 did not define progress. In 2015, there was an implicit definition in the grade criteria for good achievement where it says: 'From each different starting point, the proportions of pupils making expected progress and the proportions exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are close to or above national figures'. (Ofsted, 2015a: 71). Expected progress for Key Stage 2 was two levels from the end of Key Stage 1 (prior to the 2014 National Curriculum).

guidance as a checklist of features of good teaching, rather than considering the impact on pupils.

The inclusion of descriptors for each grade is influential because it meant that these became the 'criteria' whereas in previous handbooks these were left to inspectors' judgements or inferred from reading the examples in the handbooks, further guidance or annual reports, as described above. Until 2012, teaching was one of over 20 judgements that inspectors had to make and was included as part of three aspects of 'the quality of provision'.

In 2009, a new inspection framework was introduced (Ofsted, 2009a) with a greater focus on the government's *Every Child Matters* agenda (DfES, 2004). Inspectors had to judge and grade each of the five ECM outcomes (see page 58) in addition to judgements on provision (such as leadership and management, teaching and the curriculum). The inspection criteria for judging teaching did not change a great deal, except in the language used. The 2009 criteria promoted the idea, more strongly than in previous versions, that teaching should motivate and engage pupils. Assessment was identified in increasing detail and pupils expected to know how well they were doing. There was a reference to using 'new technology' which disappeared in the 2012 frameworks (Ofsted, 2012a; 2012b). Guidance for inspectors included an expectation that they will track the progress of different groups of pupils (as defined earlier) and record this during lesson observations (Ofsted, 2009a). Again, the changes to the wording for teaching although minor are significant in that teachers and inspectors had to come to terms with a new (albeit similar) set of expectations. Teaching was still one of 20 judgements and included as part of the quality of provision.

Prior to 2010, inspectors were expected to give an overall lesson grade when they observed a lesson (see appendix 8 for an example of an evidence form (EF) that was used until 2009). From 2010 onwards, the EF on which inspectors record all their evidence and judgements no longer included a box for the lesson grade. Inspectors were, though, expected to grade the quality of teaching in the lesson as

well as other aspects, such as achievement and behaviour (see appendix 9). The distinction between grading the teaching and grading the lesson was not made very explicit and may have been too subtle to have been noticed by schools and even some inspectors (as mentioned earlier).

Ofsted's criteria and guidance on inspecting teaching 2012 – 2015

Considerable changes took place after the 2010 General Election, which resulted in a Coalition Government between the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. The white paper 'The importance of teaching' (DfE, 2011b) set the agenda for a revised Ofsted framework, with changes described in section 2.3. The number of areas that inspectors report on was reduced to only four, which exposed 'the quality of teaching' judgement in a way that was less evident in the past when teaching was included under 'provision' and one of many more judgements. In addition, the new HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw soon made it clear that a school could not be judged outstanding overall if teaching was not outstanding (Ofsted, 2012c; Wilshaw, 2012). Kershaw (2013) reported that nearly 25 % of the 4442 'outstanding' schools had teaching that had been only judged as 'good' and so they could be re-inspected and downgraded (see page 15).

There were two inspection handbooks (or evaluation schedules) in 2012 (Ofsted, 2012a; 2012b): the first was written before Sir Michael Wilshaw had established himself as HMCI; he took over in January that year. The second was for September 2012 and introduced the term 'requires improvement' to replace 'satisfactory' (Ofsted, 2012 b; 2012c). The grade criteria altered between the January and September 2012 versions of the guidance, which caused inspectors and schools to come to terms with further changes. Although there are many common points in the two sets of teaching criteria, the wording changed, even when the meaning was more or less the same. For example, 'mainly' changed to 'usually'; 'enthuse and motivate most pupils to participate' was turned into 'a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested and engaged'. Whereas in January 2012, inspectors needed to assess whether

‘teachers regularly listen astutely to, carefully observe and skilfully question...’, in September 2012 this became ‘teachers listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils...’. Other changes were more subtle such as the ‘teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is very efficient’ was changed to ‘reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively’; the latter makes more sense as teaching efficiently does not have the same meaning. More significant changes were the inclusion of ‘pupil premium’ as a distinct group of pupils. The subjects English and mathematics are highlighted in the September 2012 version as needing to be taught well. The reference to the ‘most and least able’ pupils was also a new addition in the September 2012 criteria. Teachers’ subject knowledge did not appear in the September version, although it is part of the *Teachers’ Standards* (DfE, 2011a), and inspectors were asked to ‘consider the extent to which the Teachers’ Standards are being met’ (Ofsted, 2012b: 32).

These subtle but in some cases significant changes made it difficult for inspectors and schools to come to terms with what Ofsted expected. The reasons for the changes were not made explicit and could be simply down to an author’s preference, without consideration of the impact on inspectors and schools. A few changes were clearly politically motivated, such as the ‘pupil premium’ and possibly the ‘most able pupils’, which could have been in response to the government’s concern about international comparisons (DfE, 2010a) and a damning Ofsted report (Ofsted, 2013c).

The major difference between the two sets of 2012 criteria was the introduction of the term ‘requires improvement’ to replace ‘satisfactory’. Prior to September 2012, the handbook had included descriptors for ‘satisfactory’, but after that point it simply said: ‘Teaching requires improvement as it is not good’ (Ofsted, 2012b: 34-35). Baxter and Clarke (2013) suggest that the term was introduced because of concerns that there were too many satisfactory schools that were not improving quickly enough. Sir Michael Wilshaw made it clear from the outset of his term as HMCI that ‘satisfactory was not good enough’ (Wilshaw, 2012).

In both the January and September 2012 inspection handbooks, there was a footnote to the teaching grade descriptors that emphasised that teaching should be judged 'over time' and that the criteria 'are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons' (Ofsted, 2012b: 34). The idea of judging 'over time' was to avoid the previous practice of relying heavily on lesson observations to arrive at the teaching quality judgement. In the early days inspectors would work out the percentage of observed lessons where teaching (or the overall lesson quality) was judged outstanding, good, satisfactory or inadequate, and use this to help arrive at the overall judgement about the quality of teaching. Inspection reports would often include the proportions of teaching seen; for example, the following is an extract from a 2001 inspection report on an infant school:

Overall the quality of teaching is good and is a strength of the school. Inspection findings show teaching to be good in over 66 per cent of lessons and very good in over 25 per cent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. (Ofsted, 2001)

There was a myth around the proportion of unsatisfactory or inadequate lessons that would trigger a 'special measures' judgement and some headteachers believed that even one inadequate lesson during an inspection would prevent a school from being judged outstanding or good. It is not clear how this myth arose.

This focus on the importance of lesson observations is likely to have contributed to performativity (Jeffrey and Troman, 2012) and a plethora of commercial publications and training designed to help teachers teach the perfect outstanding Ofsted lesson (for example, TES, 2014). The idea of inspectors making their judgement based on a wider range of evidence than just lessons was designed to counter the need for a 'teaching performance' during an inspection and led to correspondence with schools to clarify Ofsted's position (Ofsted, 2014d; 2014f).

Another version of the Ofsted handbook was sent to inspectors and schools in September 2013 (Ofsted, 2013h). The section on teaching in this version was

almost identical to that in September 2012, apart from some changes to wording, such as 'comprises' (Ofsted, 2012b: 32) which became 'encompasses' (Ofsted, 2013h: 37), and to the sections 'what inspectors must consider' which included in 2013 reference to 'most able' pupils and also to the need to judge whether 'assessment is frequent and accurate and used to set relevant work from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards' (Ofsted, 2013h: 37). The descriptor for good teaching was, in 2013, identical to September 2012, apart from the addition of 'most able pupils' and 'all key stages' to the sentence about assessment. Although these changes are small, they still resulted in a new set of criteria to consider and possibly created uncertainty amongst inspectors and schools.

In September 2014 there was a further version of the handbook that said that Ofsted does not have a preferred teaching style and the instruction that teaching was not to be graded in lessons (Ofsted, 2014a; 2014b; 2014c). Sir Michael Wilshaw has made it very clear that inspection reports should not suggest that Ofsted has a preferred teaching style (Ofsted, 2014a; Wilshaw, 2014; SERCO, 2014; 2015). He stated this in a keynote speech at the headteachers' North of England conference in 2013 (Wilshaw, 2013): 'Let me say once again, Ofsted has no preferred style of teaching'. These changes to the inspection framework arose possibly in response to widespread criticism of inspection at that time by the unions and others (for example, Boustead, 2014; Bassey, 2014; Hobby, 2015; Peal, 2014; Waldegrave and Simons, 2014) as mentioned earlier.

Differentiating between grades

Since 2005, the Ofsted inspection guidance has provided descriptors for each of the teaching criteria for grades 1, 2, 3 and 4. The reasoning behind this is presumably to make it easier for inspectors to arrive at a judgement by finding the 'best fit' to the grade. The amount of detail in the different grade descriptors has changed over the years (see appendix 6). The label 'satisfactory' (grade 3) had a more positive tone than 'requires improvement' which was introduced in September 2012.

In 2005, there was a clear description of inadequate teaching, with a focus (emphasised in bold) on pupils (or particular groups) who 'do not make adequate progress because the teaching is unsatisfactory'. The inadequate teaching descriptor went on to identify features such as inadequate subject and curriculum knowledge, lack of challenge and, significantly, 'not enough independent learning takes place or learners are excessively passive' (Ofsted, 2005b: 8-9). This is significant because in 2014, inspectors were told explicitly and in many emails not to suggest that pupils should be independent or active learners, at the behest of HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw (as explained earlier in this section).

The decision to provide descriptions of each teaching grade although potentially helpful to schools and inspectors has not been without its problems. It is difficult to distinguish between outstanding and good teaching. Requires improvement has been assigned no descriptor, it simply says 'is not good'. Inadequate teaching is defined very precisely as where 'any of the following apply' teaching is 'likely to be inadequate' (for example, Ofsted, 2012b: 35). The list of features that could result in inadequate teaching include statements about pupils' outcomes in terms of inadequate progress overall, or weak reading, writing, mathematics and communication. The aspects of inadequate teaching that refer to teaching pedagogy (Ofsted, 2012b) include: expectations not being high enough, failing to engage all pupils and not matching activities to the needs of pupils. By January 2015, the descriptor for inadequate teaching no longer included the statements about teaching pedagogy and was just about the impact of teaching on pupils' achievements.

The descriptors for good and outstanding teaching also include a focus on the impact on pupils' achievements and are distinguished mainly by the use of different adjectives and adverbs. The difference between the first bullet points in the good and outstanding criteria in the January 2015 inspection handbook (Ofsted, 2015a: 61-61), which are reproduced in appendix 6, are minimal and very open to subjective interpretation. Is 'almost all' much better than 'most'? How many pupils

amounts to 'almost all'? The reference in outstanding to 'never less than consistently good' may have led headteachers to believe that one 'requires improvement' lesson observation would disqualify their school's teaching from being outstanding (which is not, in my view, Ofsted's intention). Richards (2015) undertook a detailed analysis of the teaching criteria and suggested that 'each one of the "outstanding" criteria is problematic'. His argument is about the language used and the impossibility of schools attaining the perfection described in the descriptors or of inspectors being able to judge this. His critique exposes the difficulty that Ofsted has in defining what it means by outstanding and good teaching and differentiating between the two. The 2005 handbook description of outstanding teaching (Ofsted, 2005: 8) was more succinct and, although still open to subjective interpretation, possibly easier to distinguish from good: 'Teaching is at least good in all or nearly all respects and is exemplary in significant elements. As a result, learners thrive and make exceptionally good progress'.

The focus on 'outstanding' has gained more significance since Sir Michael Wilshaw became HMCI because it is now linked to overall effectiveness (you cannot have the latter without outstanding teaching) and also because the label 'outstanding' has implications beyond inspection. The government has ruled that outstanding schools are exempt from inspection (DfE, 2011b). Only outstanding schools with outstanding teaching can apply to become teaching schools with the resulting kudos and funding (NCTL, 2014). This decision to exempt outstanding schools has not met with universal praise (for example, Morris, 2011). Russell Hobby (2015), General Secretary of NAHT, told headteachers that 'I have come to feel that one of the most pernicious aspects of our inspection regime is the 'outstanding' grade'. Ofsted has retained the distinction between good and outstanding in the latest handbook for September 2015 (Ofsted, 2015k: 46-48) so this issue is unlikely to change. However, this handbook has introduced some significant changes to the teaching criteria, which include assessment and learning. The grade descriptors focus more on features of teaching and no longer make an explicit link with pupils' progress.

Common features of the teaching criteria

There have been a number of common features about teaching in each of Ofsted's criteria for judging teaching since 1993. Firstly, inspectors have been expected to make a link between the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning and progress. This link has been made increasingly explicit in each framework, especially since 2000. For example, guidance for the 2003 framework (Ofsted, 2003: 61) states that 'the quality of teaching must be judged first and foremost in terms of its effect on learning'. In 2009, the evaluation schedule (Ofsted, 2009a: 31-32) informs inspectors to evaluate 'how well teaching promotes learning, progress and enjoyment for all pupils'. In the current handbook (Ofsted, 2015a: 57), it states that the 'most important role of teaching is to promote learning and the acquisition of knowledge by pupils and to raise achievement. It is also important in promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development'. The addition of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) is new although inspectors have been expected to give an explicit evaluation of this in lesson observations since 2012. A recent report by Coe et al (2014:2) defines great teaching as 'that which leads to improved student progress', which chimes with Ofsted's view, as articulated in each handbook for inspection.

In 1994, Ofsted commissioned a review of school effectiveness research by the Institute of Education, in order to inform the inspection guidance and criteria. The final report by Sammons et al (1995) was presumably drawn on in the next editions of the inspection framework. The research was a meta-analysis of relevant research findings linked to five main areas, the most relevant of which to this research is a study of the effectiveness of teaching and teaching methods. They quote Mortimore's (1991) definition of school effectiveness as one where students make more progress than might be expected from its intake. Sammons et al (1995) conclude that schools do make a difference to pupils' learning and attainment, based on their analysis of a wide range of research including the work of Reynolds (1982), Mortimore (1988), Tabberer, Sammons et al (1994), and Rutter et al (1979). Sammons et al (1995:10) cite the possible 'primary school effect', whereby

primary schools may have a greater influence on pupil outcomes than secondary schools and this may continue to influence achievement of pupils into secondary school. Sammons et al (1995: 71) provide a summary of the eleven 'factors for effective schools', of which the following relate to the quality of teaching: maximisation of learning time; academic emphasis; focus on achievement; purposeful teaching; high expectations and intellectual challenge; positive reinforcement (including feedback); and monitoring progress. It is hard to see how these factors influenced any changes to the teaching criteria in subsequent frameworks. In reality, the findings may simply have confirmed the Ofsted criteria writers' (HMI) existing view of what makes good quality teaching as set out in previous documents such as the HMI Curriculum Matters booklets (Bolton, 1998).

Appendix 7 summarises the main features of the criteria for judging the quality of teaching as outlined in the various inspection schedules, handbooks and guidance since 1993. A few features have remained in each iteration of the teaching criteria. These include: teachers' subject knowledge; whether teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve; differentiation, which is generally referred to as ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met; the importance of good planning with the setting of learning objectives and the need for regular assessment of pupils' learning. The way that teachers manage pupils' behaviour has also been evident in many Ofsted frameworks and has been resurrected in the version for September 2015 (Ofsted, 2015k).

Other features of teaching quality have gone in and out of the Ofsted criteria, most notably an expectation that new technologies will be used, which disappeared in 2012, although there have been subject surveys of information and communication technology (ICT) (Ofsted, 2013j). This deletion of ICT from the teaching criteria may have coincided with the government's decision to replace ICT in the curriculum by computing (DfE, 2013c; NAACE, 2014).

Ofsted inspections have always emphasised the importance of the teaching of English and mathematics. A more explicit reference to literacy and numeracy

appeared in Ofsted's frameworks from 2000 onwards to coincide with the National Strategies (see Ofsted, 2002a; 2002b). Since 2012, the teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics has been included directly into the grade descriptors for the teaching criteria (for example, Ofsted, 2012b). By 'communication' is presumably meant oral communication (as opposed to reading and writing), although it is not defined in the handbooks. The importance of the inspection of mathematics teaching and learning has grown in significance since 2012 and Ofsted has published reports on numeracy (for example, Ofsted, 2012f; 2015a: 19) and inspectors have been trained in how to inspect numeracy in primary and secondary schools (Ofsted, 2013f).

Assessment, recording and reporting were included in separate sections in early versions of the inspection handbook and focused mainly on the school's arrangements for assessment. In recent frameworks, the criteria linked to the assessment of pupils' learning have become increasingly prominent and detailed in the grade descriptors. For example, in September 2012 (Ofsted, 2012b: 34) to achieve grade 1 (outstanding) the description says: 'Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning' and 'Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make rapid gains'. This focus on assessment may well have been influenced by the findings of the Assessment Reform Group (ARG) which was set up as a policy task group in 1989 by the British Education Research Association. In 1996, the ARG was funded by the Nuffield Foundation and produced documents such as *Inside the Black Box* (Black and Wiliam, 1998), which established the phrase 'assessment for learning' as part of the education language. The importance of teachers' assessment of pupils and feedback has been emphasised in recent research into effective teaching (Husbands and Pearce, 2012; Coe et al, 2014; Siraj et al, 2014; Sutton Trust, 2013).

Each version of the Ofsted criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching has included a statement about the need for inspectors to evaluate teachers' subject

knowledge. The justification for including subject knowledge as an important feature of good teaching is not made explicit by Ofsted. Many Ofsted publications since 1993 have reported on the impact of teachers' subject knowledge or lack of it. Ofsted (2009c) summarised the findings from subject surveys between 2007 and 2008, in which inspectors visited 241 primary schools to evaluate the teaching and learning in 12 subjects and undertook 937 lesson observations. Ofsted (2009c: 4) concluded that 'inspectors noted specific weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge which meant that pupils' achievement was not as high as it might have been'. Ofsted (2009c: 6) focused specifically on the particular demands of teaching certain subjects and was not about generic pedagogy that was, according to the report 'often the best features of the lessons seen during the survey'.

Ofsted (2010b: 6) commented on the importance of teachers' subject knowledge in a report on creative learning, which was based on a survey of 44 schools. The report concluded that effective creative learning was promoted by good leadership and management and on 'teachers' subject knowledge being secure and extensive enough to support pupils' enquiry, independent thinking and debate'. Thus, the report was emphasising the importance of teachers having strong and secure knowledge about the areas they are teaching.

Not all research is so clear about the importance of subject knowledge. Poulson (2001:41-47) challenges the view of the 'ideological dominance of subject knowledge in the primary teacher's repertoire' and adds that, in relation to the primary phase, there is 'little evidence of a clear relationship between a well-developed formal academic knowledge of particular subjects and effective teaching...'. Poulson (2001) refers to a number of studies about primary teachers' subject knowledge which gave conflicting results – some suggesting that teachers' knowledge of science and mathematics in particular was weak (such as, Wragg et al, 1989, and Bennett and Carre, 1993).

McNamara (1991) states that until the mid-1980s the issue of teachers' subject knowledge was not emphasised in research into teaching or in initial teacher

education courses. McNamara (1991:115) refers to a turning point as Shulman's presidential address (Shulman, 1986) to the American Educational Research Association in 1985, when he spoke about 'the lack of attention to subject matter as the missing paradigm in educational research'. McNamara (1991) summarises the work of a number of researchers, such as Ball and McDairmaid (1989), Grossman et al (1989) and McDairmaid et al (1990), who emphasise the importance of teachers having a good level of knowledge of the subjects they are teaching.

Goulding et al (2002) identified specific weaknesses in trainee teachers' mathematical knowledge and linked this to deficiencies in their planning and teaching. Goulding et al (2002: 702) conclude that 'strengthening teachers' subject matter knowledge is a legitimate aim for ITT and CPD'. The importance of teachers' subject knowledge has been included in most Ofsted inspection teaching criteria, apart from September 2012. The 2013 and 2014 versions of the Ofsted teaching criteria, (Ofsted, 2013h; 2014a) refer to 'teachers and other adults authoritatively impart knowledge' which presumably means that they have secure subject knowledge. Hattie's (2009) meta-analysis of research into what has the most impact on student achievement does not have any direct reference to teachers' subject knowledge, which perhaps reflects the lack of research in this area. However, it could be assumed that the statements about teachers 'knowing the learning intentions and success criteria of their lessons' (Hattie, 2009: 36-37), implies that the teachers know their subject and curriculum well. Other research has highlighted the importance of teachers' knowledge (for example, Coe et al, 2014; Husbands and Pearce, 2012). Coe et al's (2014) review of research identified six components of effective teaching with the first being about teachers' subject and pedagogic knowledge:

The most effective teachers have deep knowledge of the subjects they teach, and when teachers' knowledge falls below a certain level it is a significant impediment to students' learning. As well as a strong understanding of the material being taught, teachers must also understand

the ways students think about the content, be able to evaluate the thinking behind students' own methods, and identify students' common misconceptions. (Coe et al, 2014: 2)

This statement reflects a clear view that teachers need to know the subjects that they are teaching and when they do not it has an impact on pupils' achievements. In many ways this is obvious. If a teacher cannot explain a concept because he/she does not understand it, then this will not help his/ her pupils learn that concept. On a personal level, as an inspector I have observed several lessons where a teacher has shown an incomplete understanding of, say, a physics concept when explaining it to the class; physics was my first degree. Primary school teachers generally have to teach a wide range of subjects and so the expectation that they have the necessary subject knowledge is a real challenge especially in Years 5 and 6 (DCSF, 2009).

The latest Ofsted frameworks (September 2012 to January 2015) have included a link to the *Teachers' Standards* (DfE, 2011a). Appendix 11 compares the *Teachers' Standards* to the 2012 Ofsted teaching criteria. It is evident that all of the components of the *Teachers' Standards* are reflected in the Ofsted grade descriptors. The teaching criteria also mirror much of what has been identified by research as important influences on pupils' achievements (for example, Coe et al, 2014). They are close to the findings of Siraj et al (2014), which identify the following aspects of effective pedagogy: organisation; shared objectives; homework; classroom climate; behaviour management; collaborative learning; personalised teaching and learning; making links explicit; dialogic teaching and learning; assessment for learning; plenary. Some of Siraj et al's (ibid) findings are much more specific than appear in Ofsted's criteria, such as the addition of the plenary, sharing objectives and collaborative learning, but other aspects are similar.

2.5 Key concepts: accountability and performativity and their impact on primary schools

These two concepts— performativity and accountability – which are of particular relevance to my research, are inter-dependent, as noted by Ball (2013:1094) who defines performativity as a ‘regime of accountability that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as a means of control’. Ball (2013:1105) argues that inspection along with other measures such as performance management is a means of control and results in teachers being ‘continually accountable’.

Hoyle and Wallace (2009: 204) describe how accountability in English education has been a ‘movement’ since the late 1970s, linked to greater ‘political control over professional practice’. They describe how this movement has affected teachers’ professionalism in terms of their reduced autonomy and incorporation into management and indeed that the term ‘profession’ has been superseded by ‘professional’, which they say represents the new era of efficiency and detachment. Dorn and Ydsen (2014: 3) suggest that the history of school accountability around the world goes further back, to the 1800s, although they note that the speed of recent developments ‘may have obscured the history of testing and accountability’. They describe how accountability varies around the world and is dependent on the purpose of formal education and on the role of the state.

Writing from a USA perspective, Lipman (2009: 72) suggests that accountability permeates ‘all aspects of school life’, and that there is an expectation of conformity and the threat of sanctions. The result, Lipman says, is a feeling of ‘powerlessness, heightened stress and demoralization’ by teachers. These emotions have also been attributed to the way that teachers feel when anticipating or experiencing an Ofsted inspection (for example, Ball, 1997; 2003; 2013; Case et al, 2000; Chapman, 2002; Cullingford, 1999; Perryman, 2007; 2009). Mathison and Ross (2002: 88-89) suggest that accountability has become a means of ‘enforcement and control’ by states in the US and depends on ‘surveillance and self-regulation’.

In the USA, accountability often refers to the use of standardised testing and the publication of the results, for example, in newspapers. In England, surveillance includes pupil performance league tables, but also Ofsted inspection outcomes and the publication of inspection reports.

Mattei (2012) compares different responses to market accountability in educational systems in England, Germany, France and Italy, concluding that England remains the 'outlier' in terms of its adoption of choice and competitive policies. Mattei (2012:249) describes different layers of accountability in schools: for example, internal, where teachers are accountable to headteachers and governors (hierarchical accountability) and to their peers (professional accountability). Teachers, headteachers and governors are externally accountable to bodies such as local authorities, governments and inspectorates like Ofsted (hierarchical accountability) as well as to parents and society (market accountability) and the unions and teaching councils (professional accountability). The content and mechanisms of these accountabilities are the teachers' assessments, summative tests, self-evaluation and inspection reports and league tables.

Johnson (2005) refers to the rise in England of an 'auditing culture' since the 1980s (see Chapter 2, sections 2.2 and 2.3 for the literature review pertaining to the historical and political context at that time). Johnson (2005) links the resultant performativity in schools to this auditing culture, of which Ofsted inspections are a key component. The tension between inspection as a means of improving schools and holding them to account has been evident in inspection systems around the world (McLaughlin, 2001). McLaughlin (2001) argues that accountability in some form is necessary, but is critical of the approach to Ofsted inspections prevailing at that time.

Altrichter and Kemethofer (2015) compare seven different European inspection systems, including Austria, Ireland, Sweden and the Netherlands, and report that most accountability pressure is reported by English headteachers compared with

school leaders from the other European countries. They define accountability pressure as 'pressure on individual schools and their representatives to act in conformity with the standards of an accountability system and to take action to improve school quality and effectiveness' (Altrichter and Kemethofer, 2015:37). This definition of accountability was very relevant to my research into the impact of Ofsted inspections, as they contribute in no small way to the pressure on schools.

Performativity is the school's response to the relentless cultures of accountability (Ball, 2013) and is described by Hennessy and McNamara (2013: 6) as a 'dominant goalpost in modern schooling, often at the cost of more critical educational encounters'. Brown et al (2015: 5) suggest that 'increasingly, teaching is conceived in craft-based, technicist terms strengthened by increasing prescription and performativity measures, which require teachers to present and shape knowledge in particular ways'.

Jeffrey and Troman (2009: 9) draw on Ball (1998) to describe performativity as a 'principle of governance which establishes strictly functional relations between an institution and its inside and outside environs'. They describe how 'the technologies of power were the public league tables targets and inspection reports that regulated their practice'. They also recount how primary teachers in their research had incorporated 'the language of performativity into their practices so it became the discourse of the school, the staff room and the classroom'; language such as 'PPS', 'targets', 'assessment', 'monitoring', 'outstanding' etc reflected their embodiment of performativity.

Perryman (2002; 2006; 2007) has researched the impact on staff in a case study secondary school that went into special measures (which is what happens to a school that an Ofsted team judges to be failing to provide an adequate quality of education). She observed the response of staff between 1999 and 2003 after the school went into special measures and during the period when the school was subject to regular monitoring by HMI. Perryman describes the way that teachers in

this special measures school have no choice but to conform to the expected Ofsted criteria in order to come out of special measures, but she does not go into the criteria in any detail. Perryman's work is discussed further later in this section.

Many authors refer to the notion of 'performativity' as a process in which schools attempt to act out what they believe to be the Ofsted expectations of a good or outstanding school. Ball (2013:1096) has written extensively about performativity, which he describes as a 'culture or a system of 'terror''. Ball (2003: 216) defines performativity as a:

technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic).

This description of performativity applies well to inspection, which Ball (2003: 220) describes as one of the 'mechanics of performativity', alongside appraisal, peer reviews, data-bases. Ball (2013: 1107) describes how the continuous collection of material and monitoring of performance results in teachers being constantly judged, although 'it is not always clear what is expected' – a point which will be returned to later on and which reflects the view of Gilroy and Wilcox (1997) about the ambiguity of the inspection criteria and how they are open to interpretation by inspectors and schools.

Perryman (2009: 616) describes performativity as the 'mechanism in which schools demonstrate, through documentation and pedagogy that they have been normalised, and inspection, through surveillance and panoptic techniques, examines this process'. The author suggests that schools feel obliged to conform to what they perceive as Ofsted's expectations, as explicated in the Ofsted handbooks. She quotes from Truman (1997:349) who describes inspectors as the 'absent presence in the school'. Perryman (2009) explores this theme further by referring to the way schools that have been put into special measures behave as 'panoptic performativity', because of the notion that schools are permanently under

scrutiny. Perryman (2007:173-4) concludes that this results in teachers performing in a certain way, which they perceive to be what Ofsted expects and that 'the whole school effort is directed away from education and towards passing inspection'. This is an interesting perspective as it suggests that the practice adopted to 'pass an inspection' is not education. It could be argued that the consequence of not 'performing for Ofsted' possibly resulted in the school providing a poor quality educational experience for the pupils at the school, which caused it to go into special measures in the first place. Matthews and Sammons (2005) suggest that schools that are subject to special measures generally showed marked improvement as a result of the regular monitoring they receive from Ofsted and (presumably) support from the local authority:

There is overwhelming evidence from inspection and also trends in national assessment and examination results that most schools improve markedly following a period of being subject to Special Measures and that the improvement is sustained in the majority of cases. (Matthews and Sammons, 2005:172)

Ofsted's surveys of schools' and parents' views of inspection generally present a positive picture (for example, Ofsted, 2006a; 2015g). However, this view about the positive impact of inspection is not held universally (for example, Cullingford and Daniels, 1999; Hargreaves, 1999; Gaertner and Pant, 2011; Rosenthal, 2003) as discussed earlier. Case et al (2000; 605) question the lasting impact of an inspection on primary teachers' classroom practice and state that Ofsted 'is stage-managed public accountability'. In relation to the inspection criteria and performativity, Mulcahy (2011: 95-96), writing about the Australian teaching standards, suggests that the standards should be 'understood as performative knowledge and identity practices'. The criteria that Ofsted inspectors use can be thought of as 'standards' or benchmarks against which inspectors evaluate lessons and schools evaluate their own practice.

Headteachers invite practising Ofsted inspectors to carry out mock Ofsted inspections (known as 'mocksteds') to help staff prepare for an inspection. HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw (2014a) has suggested that schools do not need to prepare for an inspection: 'Good heads do not spend inordinate amounts of time and resources on game-playing and "Mocksteds"'. The reality is that the high stakes of inspections results in performativity and what Ball (1997) has called 'fabrication'.

The way that headteachers respond to an inspection has, in my 20 years of experience, been critical in setting the tone for the way that teachers respond to the process. This personal view is endorsed by Courtney (2012:2) who claims that headteachers 'influence profoundly how the school responds both during and after inspection'. One problem for headteachers in trying to second guess Ofsted expectations is that it is not clear whether two different inspectors would arrive at the same judgement. Silcock and Wyness (1998) describe how 12 Ofsted inspectors had different viewpoints, which may influence the way that they judge a school and the quality of teaching. Courtney (2012:12) found that headteachers commented on the variability of inspectors' views and approach to inspection. He includes a damning comment that 'not every school currently receives a professional and competent service', and notes how worrying and significant this is given that, as Ferguson et al (1999:246) note, 'the penalties for failing the inspection involve such high stakes' and 'the balance of power is so uneven'.

Concerns about a lack of consistency have become more common in the past few years (Wilshaw, 2014). Morris (2013) indicates that the issue of consistency of inspectors' judgements is still of concern and quotes a teacher as saying 'it depends who you get' when talking about how inspectors judge their lessons. A report by the Education Committee (House of Commons, 2011) into the role of Ofsted quoted from a questionnaire in which half of the 77 inspectors who responded suggested that there was variable quality in inspection teams and 5 % said it was poor.

Ball (2003:216) suggests that 'teachers, as ethical subjects, find their values challenged or displaced by the terrors of performativity'. Woods and Jeffrey (1998) discuss the potential clash of value systems between inspectors and primary school teachers. Perryman (2009) says that inspectors hold the power because they have the knowledge and quotes from Foucault (1977:155) in words that could be ascribed to Ofsted: '— the eye that knows and decides, the eye that governs'. This sense of power held by inspectors is a worrying but perhaps inevitable phenomenon. It can result inevitably in the abuse of power. There was one very notable example of an inspector who was eventually sacked by Ofsted around 2002 because of his bullying approach and negative attitude (BBC, 1998).

The theme of teachers losing their professional identity is explored by many authors (Ball 1997, 2003, Jeffrey and Woods, 1996, 1998, Jeffrey 2002, Osgood 2006, Wilkins 2011). Ball (2003: 221-223) describes the impact of inspections on teachers' feeling of self-worth, including their professionalism. He refers to the range of different emotions and activities, including some that are contradictory, arising during an inspection. He suggests that inspections result in schools becoming schizophrenic, with contradictions between 'first order and 'second order' activities. The first order being activities that contribute directly to teaching such as 'direct engagement with students, research, and curriculum' development. The second order activities are to do with 'performance management and monitoring', which are time-consuming and sometimes more to do with presenting a good external image than about improving the experience for learners. This contradiction results, Ball (2003) continues, with teachers becoming schizophrenic in terms of trying to balance their own beliefs about how they should teach with the need to 'play the game' and to conform to performativity, especially in terms of Ofsted's perceived expectations. More recently Ball (2013) concludes that performativity also has an effect on interpersonal and role relationships in a school with an increase in emotional pressures and stress experienced by teachers.

The reference to schizophrenia could equally refer to inspectors. Woods and Jeffrey (1998: 549) reported nearly 15 years ago about the tension faced by

registered inspectors who had to 'resolve the basic contradiction between the technicism of the OFSTED model and their own personal values'. Current inspection reports are tightly defined by Ofsted (for example, Ofsted, 2014b) and backed up by guidance from ISPS (for example, Tribal, 2014b), which restricts what lead inspectors can say to ensure that the report will 'pass' the quality assurance process.

Impact on primary schools

In many respects, primary school teachers have a tougher time than their secondary counterparts when inspected, as alluded to in the Select Committee report (HOC, 1999) and based on my own experience of inspecting schools over many years. Because there are fewer teachers, generally, primary teachers are likely to be seen more than once, particularly if they are teaching end of Key Stage classes such as Year 2 and Year 6, where they are likely to be observed teaching literacy and numeracy lessons.

Jeffrey (2002) suggests that primary teachers have been particularly affected by what is referred to as the 'performativity discourse', as a change from a 'Plowden discourse' that was humanistic, child-centred and valued 'warm and caring relationships'. Jeffrey (2002:544) contends that the performativity discourse affects not only the teachers' feeling of identity and professionalism but also their relationship with pupils, colleagues and the local authority. Relationships have become 'more utilitarian' and 'less personal, less familiar, less emotional, less sensitive, less warm and less empathetic'.

Case and Case (2000: 612- 617) report the stress experienced by primary school teachers as they respond to the 'heightened sense of accountability' when they prepare for an inspection. They note that there are consequences that extend beyond the inspection itself: 'The fatigue produced by preparing for inspection actually reduces teaching effectiveness for a significant period of time following the visit'. They describe the teachers as feeling worn down, fatigued and demotivated.

Since Case and Case wrote this paper, the inspection framework has changed several times, with less time spent in school. In addition, teachers may have become more used to the inspection regime so that it may feel less threatening than it did in the period up to 2000.

A report by Wilkins (2011: 389- 405) describes the views of a number of recently qualified primary school teachers in what he describes as a 'post-performative' era. The teachers interviewed had started their own education around the time of the National Curriculum in 1989 and experienced as pupils 'a schools system increasingly subjected to external regulation and market-led management approaches'. The new teachers will also, Wilkins (2011: 405) suggests, have experienced as pupils a number of Ofsted inspections. The findings of the research were a surprise to Wilkins who found that these new teachers had formed an identity for themselves as professionals and that although they were under constant pressure 'to perform', it did not 'significantly conflict with their professional identity'. He speculates that the reasons for this may be that for the post-performative teacher, the 'improvement agenda, the remorseless focus on increasing the quality of teaching and learning and the standards of attainment by pupils, is a given'. It has always been part of their lives as teachers. This more relaxed approach to accountability might extend to being inspected, but this could be the focus for another research project to look at whether post-performative teachers respond differently to their pre-performative counterparts (who are decreasing in number).

2.6 Chapter summary

The literature review has served a number of purposes. It provides background into the provenance of Ofsted and highlights the important role that HMI played prior to and after Ofsted was established as a non-ministerial department by the Education (Schools) Act 1992 (DES, 1992). The historical account of inspections in England, from 1839 when the first HMI were appointed, revealed how Ofsted was conceived out of a political desire to raise standards in schools by increasing the frequency of

school inspections and providing more information for parents and the community through published school reports. There was also an increasing concern from Conservative politicians, in particular, that HMI, who prior to Ofsted worked alongside civil servants in the education ministry departments and provided advice to ministers as well as inspecting schools and other educational institutions, were part of the problem as they were judged to be 'consecrating the profanity of progressive education' (Lee and Fitz, 1997: 45-46). HMI survived and were retained in the new organisation, albeit in reduced numbers. The chief HMI was retitled HMCI and holds a position of considerable power, which various incumbents have exploited in different ways.

There has not been a great deal of research into the teaching criteria themselves, so the review in this chapter concentrated mainly on a scrutiny of how the criteria were represented in the different Ofsted handbooks since 1993. Ofsted has not attempted to explain or justify its teaching criteria, although from 2012 they have been linked to the *Teachers' Standards* (DfE, 2011a). The Ofsted frameworks and guidance have changed many times since the first version in 1993 and particularly frequently in the last three years since Sir Michael Wilshaw took over as HMCI. The grading scale has also changed four times in total. The main components of the teaching criteria, which describe what inspectors should look for, did not change a great deal until 2012, although the words often altered without explanation. Prior to 2005, there was separate guidance for the inspection of primary schools along with examples in the inspection handbooks, survey reports and HMCI's annual reports that described for inspectors and schools what it considered to be good teaching.

The findings from literature relating to research into effective teaching indicate a close synergy with Ofsted's criteria, which have stated with increasing directness that the quality of teaching is linked 'first and foremost' to pupils' achievements. The year 2005 was a watershed year with a new inspection framework (Ofsted, 2005a), section 5 inspections (DFES, 2005), fewer inspector days in school, a greater focus on literacy and numeracy to the exclusion (almost) of other subjects

and grade descriptors for each of the new teaching grades (outstanding, good, satisfactory and inadequate). It could be said that from this point onwards, the grade descriptors became the teaching criteria.

The influence of politics on the teaching criteria has been evident though far less than on the inspection framework as a whole. Government policies, such as the National Strategies, have introduced a focus on the evaluation of the teaching of literacy, numeracy, and phonics. More recently, inspectors have to judge the impact of the school's use of the 'pupil premium' funds, which was a Coalition Government initiative. It is harder to discern from the literature whether educational research has had much impact on the teaching criteria. An exception is the increasing importance given to the inspection of how teachers assess pupils and provide feedback to show them how to improve. This coincided with the recognition given to Black and Wiliam's (1998) assessment for learning, which was also enshrined in the National Strategies (DfE, 2011d).

Since 2012, the amount of literature, research and newspaper headlines about Ofsted and the inspection of teaching has increased, linked to changes introduced following the election of the Coalition government in 2010 and the appointment of Sir Michael Wilshaw as HMCI in 2012. There have been four new frameworks since January 2012 and a fifth version for September 2015. The quality of teaching now assumes more importance than ever, partly because teaching is now one of only four main inspection judgements, whereas it was one of over 20 at one point. Since 2012, the teaching judgement has to be 'outstanding' for a school to be judged 'outstanding' overall, which then exempts the school from inspection (DfE, 2011b) and also enables the school to be considered for teaching school status. 'Satisfactory' has become 'requires improvement'. In addition to these changes, the way that inspectors judge teaching has been overhauled in the last inspection framework, with inspectors not grading teaching in lessons and being careful not to suggest that Ofsted has a preference for a particular teaching style.

The importance of HMIs' role has emerged as they are the authors of the inspection guidance and criteria as well as the guardians of inspection reports, which they quality assure. From September 2015, Ofsted is bringing back the management of inspections in-house and additional inspectors have had to apply to be included in future inspection work; they will be called 'Ofsted inspectors' from September 2015. HMCI, Sir Michael Wilshaw has promised to recruit more practising headteachers as Ofsted inspectors, as explained in a letter to Lord Storey in March 2014 (HOC, 2014), although this is not without possible concerns (Baxter, 2013 and 2014).

An industry has grown up around training teachers to deliver an 'outstanding Ofsted lesson'. The spotlight has been thrown on teaching and lesson observations as never before with much criticism from several quarters, particularly the unions who in 2013 gave Sir Michael Wilshaw and Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Education, votes of no confidence (Garner, 2013) and declared that Sir Michael Wilshaw 'had turned education standards watchdog Ofsted into a political tool of the government'.

Ofsted maintained from the outset that its purpose was 'improvement through inspection'. That this has been achieved was not the purpose of this research, though some of Ofsted's own evidence suggests that it has; for example, in terms of the proportion of good and outstanding schools (Ofsted, 2013e). Ofsted has attempted to achieve this goal of improvement partly by sharing its inspection guidance and criteria with schools, which were praised in the early days (Matthews and Sammons, 2004).

Much of the research about Ofsted has been about the way schools respond and the performativity that results because headteachers and teachers attempt to emulate what they believe Ofsted considers good practice. This literature review has included examples of this research, in particular Perryman (2002; 2007; 2009) who has focussed on how teachers in a failing school (subject to special measures) respond when they are in a panoptic regime of constant monitoring and

Ball (2003; 2013) who describes performativity as a 'culture or a system of terror'.

The literature highlights the stress experienced by teachers when they are observed and this was an area I followed up when I interviewed teachers. The frequent changes to the inspection frameworks, guidance and criteria reflect what Clarke and Ozga (2011:21) describe as 'unsettled and changeable, caught up in the processes of 'hyperactive' policy making', which makes life for school leaders and teachers very difficult as they struggle to keep up to ensure that they perform to what they consider to be the Ofsted gold standard.

Chapter 3 Methodology and methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter starts with a consideration of the theoretical framework that underpins the research. This is followed by an outline of the methodology and methods used to collect data in order to answer the research questions (see page 22):

In this chapter I explain how and why I chose a particular methodology, using the Strauss and Corbin (1998:3) definition of methodology as a 'way of thinking about and studying social reality' as distinct from methods, which they suggest are a 'set of procedures and techniques for gathering and analysing data'. Cohen et al (2003: 45) summarises a definition of methodology by Kaplan (1973), saying that 'the aim of methodology is to help us understand...not the products of scientific enquiry, but the process itself'. The methods used are described and evaluated. I also explain how I tackled the ethical and positionality issues associated with the research. The chapter concludes with a description of how the data were gathered and analysed in order to seek answers to the research questions.

3.2 Theoretical framework

Prior to my upgrade interview, I had considered adopting both a Foucauldian and a Bourdieuan framework because I acknowledged that both have relevance for my research. Skourdoumbis and Gale (2013: 893) applied Foucauldian and Bourdieuan perspectives in their research into teacher effectiveness, justifying this on the grounds that a 'unique mediated advantage is gained in their combination'. I believed that Foucault's notions of power and discipline (Marshall, 2002, for example) would help me to understand and analyse the 'power' of Ofsted and its impact on headteachers and teachers. Several authors have described Ofsted's power and impact in Foucauldian terms (for example, Ball, 2003; Ozga, 2009; Perryman, 2007; Woods and Jeffrey, 1998). Perryman makes extensive reference to Foucault in her research into schools that have been judged by Ofsted to be

failing to provide an adequate quality of education (ie in special measures).

Perryman (2009) says that inspectors hold the power because they have the knowledge and quotes from Foucault (1977:155) in words that could be ascribed to Ofsted: '— the eye that knows and decides, the eye that governs'.

I eventually decided after the upgrade interview, with advice, to focus solely on Bourdieu's work for the theoretical framework. The justification for focusing on Bourdieu was that several authors have applied a Foucauldian perspective to Ofsted inspections, most notably Jane Perryman (for example, Perryman, 2002; 2005; 2006), which would have restricted my unique contribution to the field. There have been far fewer applications of Bourdieuan concepts to research into Ofsted inspections. A number of authors have considered the issues of school leadership from a Bourdieuan perspective (Eacott, 2013 and Thomson, 2010, for example). Grenfell (1996) applied Bourdieu's concepts to initial teacher education. 'The sociology of education has learned a great deal from Bourdieu', concludes Nash (1990: 446), although he is critical of the use of 'habitus'. Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' has been applied by Reay (1995) to an analysis of practice in an urban primary classroom and in understanding higher education choices in terms of family or institutional habitus (Reay, 1998).

Bourdieu's work was mainly concerned with social class and issues of inequality; hence I hoped that my application of the concepts of habitus and field to Ofsted inspections and their impact on teachers and headteachers would represent original research. Grenfell and James (2004: 509) argue that 'Bourdieu's sociology can be used outside of the usual sociological concerns of inequalities of race, class and gender' and they apply it to the field of educational research itself. Hence my decision to follow a Bourdieuan approach.

I attempted to use Bourdieu's 'thinking tools', particularly habitus and field, to guide my analysis of data and to interpret various actors' responses to interview questions about Ofsted's criteria for teaching. I also found Bourdieu's references to

symbolic violence and reflexivity relevant to my research approach and analysis. These ideas are discussed later in this chapter. First, I will discuss how Bourdieu concepts of reflexivity, habitus and field informed my analysis of data from interviews with former and current HMI, headteachers and teachers.

Bourdieu's thinking tools

I was drawn to Jenkins' (2002: 67) reference to Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' of habitus, practice and field, which I considered could inform an analysis of my interview data. Reay (1995: 361) states that Bourdieu describes his concepts as 'open concepts designed to guide empirical work' (Bourdieu, 1990:107). I attempted to use these 'thinking tools', particularly habitus and field, to guide my analysis of data and to interpret various actors' responses to interview questions about Ofsted's criteria for teaching. I also found Bourdieu's references to symbolic violence and reflexivity relevant to my research approach and analysis. These ideas are discussed later in this chapter. First, I will discuss how Bourdieu concepts of reflexivity, habitus and field informed my analysis of data from interviews with former and current HMI, headteachers and teachers.

Thomson (2010:6) informs us of how Bourdieu drew on his own experience to 'reflexively understand their social production'. My research was inspired and informed by my own experience as an HMI and Ofsted inspector. This made me aware of my positionality as a school inspector and the need for reflexivity particularly in relation to the research interviews and the analysis of data. Bourdieu, in conversation with Wacquant (1989: 33-34), talks of the 'sociology of sociology' and how sociologists need to be aware of their own position and bias: 'as soon as we observe the social world, we introduce in our perception of it a bias due to the fact that to study it, to describe it, to talk about it, we must retire from it more or less completely'. He continues that 'it is not that theoretic knowledge is worth nothing, but we must know its limits and accompany scientific accounts with an account of the limits'. My research findings are inevitably limited by: my choice of questions; my choice of interviewees and my analysis of the data. I have attempted to

acknowledge and discuss the limitations when describing the analysis of the data later in this chapter.

Habitus

Habitus is not a straightforward concept and is variously defined and refined by Bourdieu and applied by other authors at different moments in time. For Nash (1990:433-434) habitus is 'a system of durable dispositions inculcated by objective structural conditions'. He continues that the habitus 'is embodied' and 'generates its practices for some time even when the objective conditions which gave rise to it have disappeared'. Nash (1990: 440) describes how habitus is about 'group practices and strategies ... which become embodied in individuals'. Reay (2004: 432) suggests that habitus is one of Bourdieu's less well known and 'most contested concepts'. She suggests that the term is often included in academic texts to bestow 'gravitas without doing any theoretical work'. I was acutely aware of the need to avoid falling into this trap and so attempted to use the concepts to help me understand and interpret the implications of my analysis of data.

Another interpretation of habitus from Reay (1995: 354) when quoting Bourdieu is 'the feel for the game is the social game embodied and turned into a second nature'. Cole and Gunter (1990:140) also refer to Bourdieu's notion of 'playing the game'. I considered that the idea of playing a game was particularly relevant for teachers and headteachers when they were thinking about an impending Ofsted inspection. The phrase 'playing the game' was used by some of them during my interviews, highlighting a resonance with Bourdieu's theoretical work.

The idea that members of a social group, such as a school community or the Inspectorate, can be said to have developed a collective, or institutional, habitus was very relevant to my research. I wondered whether the notion of institutional or collective habitus could be applied to the community of former and current HMI, Ofsted as well as to teachers and headteachers within and across individual schools.

Diamond et al's (2004: 76) investigations into the education of low income African American students in America refer to 'organisational habitus' which they define as 'class-based dispositions, perceptions, and appreciations transmitted to individuals in a common organizational culture'. Barber (2002) also uses a similar term – 'institutional habitus' – in the context of a study into student- teacher relations in a school in Australia. Swartz (1997:105) says that 'Bourdieu emphasises the collective basis of habitus, stressing that individuals who internalise similar life chances share the same habitus'. Bourdieu himself does not use the term institutional or collective habitus but, in discussion with Wacquant says:

The structural affinity of habituses belonging to the same class is capable of generating practices that are convergent and objectively orchestrated outside of any collective "intention" or consciousness, let alone "conspiracy". (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 125)

I considered that HMI, headteachers and teachers might display practices – behaviours and responses– that are similar and unconscious. However, the term 'institutional habitus' is not accepted by everyone. Atkinson (2011: 331-347) is critical of the way that the term institutional habitus is applied by Reay (2005) and others to schools and other institutions. Atkinson (2011) argues that 'the kinds of qualities the notion of habitus is supposed to convey simply cannot be extended to the collective level'. He says that Bourdieu's himself rarely used the terms family or institutional habitus, although he did refer to class habitus. Bourdieu's use of the term, asserts Atkinson (2011), was not meant to specify class as an agent but rather as a label for 'describing the family resemblances between individuals situated in a certain section of social space'.

This criticism by Atkinson, described above, resulted in a response by Burke, Emmerich and Ingram (2013), who present a defence of the concept collective habitus (institutional and familial). They suggest that it is possible for habitus to be both an individual and collective concept and:

... if we think of the concept of collective habitus as a socio-analytical tool of the Bourdieuan researcher in their dynamic, flexible and critical engagement with empirical data, then its value cannot be missed. It lies precisely in the way in which we act together and can be held socially and morally responsible for doing so. (Burke, Emmerich and Ingram, 2013:169)

Atkinson (2013) provided a robust response to the criticisms and reiterated his belief that there is no need to invent the terms institutional habitus as there are existing Bourdieuan concepts, such as 'doxa' that serve that purpose. He added:

... the fact that certain people are gelled together in perception as belonging to a particular 'school' or 'family', with a degree of unity and shared experience and expectations, which then shapes their actions; and on the other hand, the way in which the school or family seems to exist and act as a monolithic agent through its delegated spokespeople. Now if readers think that sounds not only perfectly reasonable but rather familiar then they have good reason, for they are precisely the phenomena that I described under the labels of doxa (family spirit/school ethos) and 'mystery of ministry' in my original critique. (Atkinson, 2013:183)

Despite this debate, many researchers continue to use the term institutional habitus (for example, Bodoviski, 2014; Donnelly, 2014; Forbes and Lingard, 2013; Smyth and Banks, 2012; and Weissmann, 2013). I have used this term in the sense defined by Smyth and Banks (2012: 265) as 'the impact of a social group on an individual's behaviour as it is mediated through organisations such as schools'. I considered that this definition might be useful when analysing responses from individuals to the interview questions, to identify evidence of the impact of their being part of a group.

I identified four broad communities or institutions in my research within the 'field of inspection': community of HMI (or former HMI); teachers; headteachers; and the

school as a community. It was not clear before I began the data analysis whether headteachers and teachers could be considered as a single group. There were definite points of convergence between teachers and the headteacher in a given school, but enough differences to warrant consideration as having a separate agency. I concluded that I did not have enough evidence from a single school to consider it as an institution as I only interviewed the headteacher and two teachers. Therefore, I chose not to analyse the institutional school habitus.

Field and symbolic power

Bourdieu (in conversation with Wacquant, 1989: 39-40) describes fields as 'relational' and 'as a network...of objective relations between positions objectively defined' and 'each field presupposes and generates by its very functioning the belief in the value of the stakes it offers'. Swartz (1997:117) says that fields are a 'key spatial metaphor in Bourdieu's sociology' and the arena or social setting in which habitus functions. According to Jenkins (2002:85) a field is a system of 'social positions ...structured internally in terms of power relations and access to 'goods' in the field. He describes goods as capital' of which there are four kinds: economic; social; cultural ('legitimate knowledge of one kind or another'; and symbolic ('prestige and social honour'). Within fields, whose boundaries 'can only be determined by empirical investigation...marked by more or less institutionalised "barriers to entry"' (Bourdieu in Wacquant, 1989: 39), the actors share many common beliefs and cultural capital.

Grenfell and James (2004: 519) show how 'Bourdieu's sociology can be used outside of the usual sociological concerns of inequalities of race, class and gender, and their mechanisms of operation'. They apply Bourdieu's concept of field to educational research itself and state that in this field:

Symbolic capital takes the form of knowledge, and the manifestations of this capital include grants and various key markers of standing... a field is

bounded, and there is that which is included in it and that which is excluded. (Grenfell and James, 2004: 510).

Relevant to my research and my science background is the suggestion that Bourdieu's 'field' is akin to the scientific idea of a force-field such as magnetic field:

Each field describes its particular values and possesses its regulatory principles. These principles delimit a socially structured space in which agents struggle, depending on the position they occupy in that space, either to change or to preserve its boundaries and form. Two properties are central to this succinct definition. First, a field is a patterned system of objective forces (much in the manner of a magnetic field), a relational configuration endowed with a *specific gravity* [author's italics] which it imposes on all the objects and agents which enter it. In the manner of a prism it refracts external forces according to its internal structure. (Bourdieu and Wacquant: 1992:17)

The description is interesting, although it includes a mixture of scientific analogies. The idea that a social field, such as the domain of inspection, exerts a force field can be applied to my notion of an inspection field. A force field (in the scientific sense) extends to infinity from the centre or source; it has no limits. However, the strength of the force it exerts on objects in the field decreases according to an inverse square law¹⁶ – the further away from the centre of the field the weaker the force. If we consider that the source of the field is Ofsted itself, then the agents in the field that experience the force are inspectors, HMI, headteachers and teachers. This suggests that teachers, who are further from the source (ie Ofsted) than, say inspectors and headteachers, experience the impact of the force less. The reality may be the opposite. Ball (2003: 216) describes the impact of performativity on teachers: 'these struggles are currently highly individualized as teachers, as ethical subjects, find their values challenged or displaced by the terrors of performativity'. Jeffrey (2002: 544) in studying the changing relationships between teachers,

¹⁶ Force $\propto 1/d^2$, where d is the distance from the source of the field.

students and inspectors under the Ofsted performativity regime, states that 'relations between teachers, colleagues and local inspectors have become less humanistic as they each take up a more defined role.... Equal and open negotiative relations have been superseded by hierarchical, dependent and deferential relations'.

The inverse law works in relation to influence and power. Teachers are the furthest educator agents from the source of inspections, Ofsted, and have the least power over how they experience inspections. The following diagram illustrates my view of the field of inspection in terms of the relationship between distance from the source and power of the agents. I have included parents and pupils, as to omit these key stakeholders would make the field incomplete. It would be interesting to explore more about parents' and pupils' perceptions of Ofsted inspections.

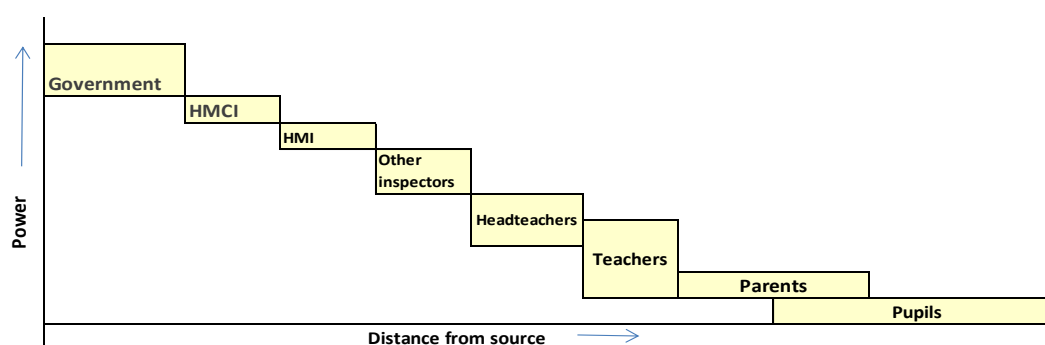


Figure 3.1 The 'field of inspection'

Bourdieu uses another metaphor to explain the concept of habitus and field– that of a sports arena or playing field. Maton (2012: 53) says that:

Bourdieu often uses the analogy of a game and the notion of “strategy” to emphasise the active creative nature of practices. Each social field of practice (including society as a whole) can be understood as a competitive game or “field of struggles” in which actors strategically improvise in their quest to maximise their positions.

This description of actors improvising strategically in order to 'maximise their positions' can be related to that of headteachers who learn how to 'play the game' to get the best Ofsted outcome. Similarly, teachers adapt their practice when being observed during Ofsted inspections and possibly also when observed for performance management by their own school senior leaders (Ball, 2003; Case et al, 2000; Perryman, 2006; 2007; Troman, 2008).

I have chosen to view the domain of 'inspection' as a single field within which various sub-groups are positioned. This allows for levels of power and dominance to be identified, with government having over-arching political power. The sub-groups that share common beliefs and for the most part economic and cultural capital and an institutional habitus are: current and former senior members of Ofsted (HMI); other inspectors (called additional inspectors); the community of headteachers; community of teachers. There are, however, hierarchies within these sub-groups, for example, some HMI hold positions of seniority within Ofsted and some headteachers are also NLEs and/ or additional inspectors and therefore could be said to have more symbolic capital in the inspection field. more significantly, across them and within the 'inspection field' which have a direct influence on actors' responses to my interview questions.

Jenkins (2002: 86) says that in order to use Bourdieu's concept of field in social research, it is necessary to apply three operations. The most important, he states, is the relationship to the field of power, which is politics, 'the dominant field of any society'. This is certainly the case in terms of the field of Ofsted inspection, which was established by and continually influenced by politics. Jenkins' second operation is to prepare a 'social topology' or relations between positions in the field in 'their competition for ...the specific form of capital'. His third is that the 'habitus(es) of the agents in the field must be analysed along with the ...strategies which are produced in the interaction between habitus and constraints and opportunities which are determined by the structure of the field'.

Applying Jenkin's (2002) ideas to the field of inspection (visualised in figure 3.1 above), the most dominant position is that of the Government. Ofsted is supposed to be independent of the government as a non-ministerial department; as quoted on the Ofsted website: 'We report directly to Parliament and we are independent and impartial.' Ofsted's independence has been called into question (Bolton, 1998) and more recently by the Local Government Association (Pott-Negrine, 2015). I explored how headteachers and former Ofsted employees viewed the impact of Government policies on the inspection criteria.

Second in the hierarchy comes Ofsted itself, with HMCI having the most cultural and symbolic capital. Former employees I interviewed commented on the influence of HMCI on the criteria and I am aware of this from my own time in Ofsted. The team of HMI, of which there are currently around 400 involved in the inspection of schools, comes next in the topology. HMI are for the most part held in more respect than additional inspectors (Bolton, 1998; Goodings and Dunford, 1990; Lee and Fitz, 1997 and 1998; and Smith, 2000). HMI wield a lot of cultural and symbolic capital because of their position in Ofsted as authors of the criteria and final arbiters of inspection judgements. Next in order comes headteachers, who are accountable to governing bodies and who have symbolic power over their teachers who are furthest from the source of power and communication, apart from parents and pupils (Hatcher, 2005 and Thomson, 2010). Hatcher (2005:256) noted that in a school 'the head occupies the dominant position in the power structure and therefore the privileged site of influence'. These ideas are explored in the analysis of interview data.

Of relevance to the world of Ofsted and how headteachers and teachers respond is Bourdieu's notion of symbolic power which Swartz (1997: 89) says is the capacity to 'impose the means for comprehending and adapting to the social world by representing economic and political power in disguised taken-for-granted forms'. Swartz (1997:89) states that Bourdieu defines symbolic power as:

every power to exert symbolic violence, i.e. every power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force, adds its own specifically symbolic force to those power relations. (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977:4)

Reay (1995: 361) quotes Kraus:

Symbolic violence is a subtle, euphemized, invisible mode of domination that prevents domination from being recognised as such and, therefore, as misrecognised domination, is socially recognised. It works when subjective structures—the habitus and objective structures are in accord with each other. (Kraus, 1993:172)

In one sense it might be surprising to consider that Ofsted wields symbolic violence, since its level of dominance and power over headteachers and teachers is relatively transparent. However, the impact of its influence runs very deep and Ofsted has become part of the establishment in the sense described by Bourdieu. My reasons for describing it thus come from the responses of headteachers and teachers whose almost unquestioning acceptance of the status quo, of Ofsted's omnipotent authority, was a revelation.

The process of external inspection by Ofsted has become so accepted by headteachers, who have established (according to their own accounts) regimes of 'inspection-type' monitoring, that they could be considered to exert symbolic violence (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) over their teachers. This was considered when I analysed the responses of teachers to the interview questions, which covered not only their responses to Ofsted criteria but also how the criteria were used by their senior leadership teams.

The term habitus is often used in respect of social class (Bourdieu, 1984; Reay, 1995; Swartz, 1997:143). Bourdieu and Passeron (1990: 204), when writing about the impact on education of social class, refer to 'class habitus' and add that:

Only an adequate theory of habitus, as the site of the internalisation of externality and the externalization of internality, can fully bring to light the social conditions of performance of the function of legitimating the social order, doubtless the best concealed of all functions of the School. Because the traditional system of education manages to present an illusion that its action of inculcation is entirely responsible for producing the cultivated habitus, or, by apparent contradiction, that it owes its differential efficacy exclusively to the innate abilities of those who undergo it, and that it is therefore independent of class determinations— whereas it tends towards the limit of merely confirming and strengthening a class habitus which, constituted outside the School, is the basis of all scholastic acquirements.

I have included this extract because it illustrates Bourdieu's reference to class habitus and the impact of social class on educational achievements and how schools legitimate the social order without seemingly being conscious of so doing. Although Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) were writing about education in the French system around the middle of the last century, there is much synergy with education in Britain today. Much has been written about the underperformance of pupils from working class (or perhaps more accurately, low income) backgrounds (HOC, 2014a; Carter and Whitfield, 2012; Connelly et al, 2014; Perry and Francis, 2010; Ofsted, 2013b). Perry and Francis (2010:2) state that 'social class remains the strongest predictor of educational achievement in the UK, where the social class gap for educational achievement is one of the most significant in the developed world'. Connelly et al (2014:4) conclude that: 'Poverty is very strongly linked to low attainment in school'. This conclusion persists despite the additional money that the Coalition Government has allocated for pupils eligible for the 'pupil premium' (DfE, 2013b). The link between social class and educational achievement is not directly relevant to my research. However, there may be implications in terms of the role that Ofsted plays in assigning labels to schools (such as 'outstanding' or 'inadequate', etc.), which may be as much about the social class of the school context as the quality of education provided by the

school. This suggestion appears to be backed up by research which has looked at Ofsted outcomes and areas of disadvantage (Lupton, 2004; Ofsted, 2011b).

Ofsted's Annual Report of 2010/11 noted that:

The fifth of schools serving the most deprived pupils were four times more likely to be found inadequate than the fifth of schools serving the least deprived pupils. Seventy-one per cent of schools serving the least deprived pupils were judged to be good or outstanding this year compared with 48% of schools serving the most deprived. (Ofsted, 2011b: 9)

Ofsted has not repeated this analysis in subsequent annual reports. However, data from the Ofsted's Data View website (downloaded on 12 April 2015) showed that twice as many schools in affluent areas were judged outstanding compared with areas of high deprivation, that were twice as likely to be judged 'requires improvement'. Two per cent of schools in areas of high deprivation have been judged inadequate, whereas there are none in areas of low deprivation. Bourdieu (1984:15) refers to the 'best hidden effect of the educational system, the one it produces by imposing 'titles', a particular case of the attribution of status, whether positive (ennobling) or negative (stigmatizing)...'. Although Bourdieu was referring to the educational system as a whole, Ofsted's regime of accountability uses labels and assigns titles that can be supportive (for example, when a school is judged as 'good' or 'outstanding') or devastating and stigmatizing when a school is declared as 'failing' and requiring 'special measures'.

To investigate further the link between Ofsted outcomes and disadvantage could be a research topic for another time. In particular, to see if there is the same individual and institutional habitus within Ofsted and inspection teams that predisposes judgements to favour advantaged schools. In this research, I wanted to find out if HMI were aware of the impact of the organisation (Ofsted) on the teachers' and headteachers' habitus in the field of inspection. I did not pursue the possibility that social class (say of the teachers, headteachers or myself) had implications for my research; this would be an interesting area for future research.

3.3 Methodological approach

The purpose of this research was to provide a critical review of the development of the evaluation criteria used by Ofsted inspectors and published in Ofsted guidance, that inform inspectors' judgements about the quality of teaching in mainstream schools. The research included an investigation into the political contexts and possible influences on the Ofsted inspection criteria in the period 1993 to the present day and the likely impact of other educational developments during that period. I also sought to find out how a sample of primary headteachers and teachers perceive and use the criteria in their work. Curtis et al (2014:1) quote from Booth et al (1995:6) in defining research as 'gathering the information you need to answer a question and thereby help you solve a problem'.

My initial inclination in terms of methodology was based on a positivist ontology and a quantitative approach, as defined by Bryman (2008:697) in terms of research that 'emphasises quantification in the collection and analysis of data'. The preference for a quantitative approach arose because of my background as a science teacher with a first degree in physics and post-graduate studies in physical science education theory and practice. Cohen et al (2003: 28) refer to positivism as striving for 'objectivity, measurability, predictability, controllability...'. Newby (2010: 34-5) suggests that positivism is about quantitative analysis and the testing of a hypothesis. Suggesting a hypothesis and analysing data to arrive at a conclusion were appealing. I considered collecting data about the outcomes of inspection in terms of the quality of teaching judgements and collecting data from questionnaires sent to headteachers to ask them about their views on the criteria and how they use them in their schools. I soon decided that this approach was not appropriate for my particular focus, for reasons described below.

Cohen et al (2011: 7) suggests that positivism is less successful when applied to 'the study of human behaviour where the immense complexity of human nature and the elusive and intangible quality of social phenomenon contrast strikingly with the order and regularity of the natural world'. As the research questions and focus

became more refined it became clearer that a qualitative approach, as defined by Bryman (2008:697) as emphasising 'words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data', would be more appropriate. My research into the teaching criteria and how they are perceived and used is about people's feelings, reactions and behaviours, all of which are difficult to express in numbers and are more appropriately expressed in words. Denscombe (1998:207) draws from Tesch (1990) in suggesting that qualitative research is concerned with 'meanings and the way people understand things' and a 'concern with patterns of behaviour.' Denscombe (1998:208) suggests that qualitative research is more than this description and is about the way that the data are interpreted by the researcher and that the 'researcher's self plays a significant role in the production and interpretation of qualitative data'. In other words, the data that I planned to gather was not out there waiting to be collected and analysed but was dependent on my personal interpretation of it, which is influenced by my own values and beliefs. Such a description was of particular relevance because of my close involvement with the topic I was researching.

At one point I was drawn to a mixed methods approach, which Bryman (2008:695) describes as being recently interpreted as research that combines quantitative and qualitative research methods. Creswell and Tashakkori (2007:3), in editing the first edition of the Journal of Mixed Methods Research, describe how there are inconsistencies in the way researchers (they include themselves in this) define mixed methods:

For example, we found it necessary to distinguish between mixed methods as a collection and analysis of two types of data (qualitative and quantitative) and mixed methods as the integration of two approaches to research (quantitative and qualitative). On the surface, the two seemed interchangeable. However, on more careful examination, we found distinct differences between them with the former more closely focused on "methods" and the latter on "methodology."

Johnson and Onwuegbusi (2004:14- 26) refer to the 'paradigm wars' and how entrenched purists on both sides can be in opposition to the other's methods and to mixed methods. The authors argue for a pragmatic paradigm in which mixed methods are acceptable, if not preferable. They contend that 'taking a non-purist or compatibility or mixed position allows researchers to offer mix and match design component. Research methods should follow the research questions in a way that offers the best chance to obtain useful answers'. The attraction of a mixed methods approach (see also Alise and Teddlie, 2010; Dawson, 2009:21; Howe, 2003; and Newby 2010:128), which is sometimes referred to as 'triangulation' rather than mixed methods) derived from my original intention to combine a qualitative approach, through interviews, with quantitative data from headteachers' responses to questionnaires, and data from Ofsted's statistics about the proportions of teaching judged to be good, outstanding etc.

I soon moved away from adopting mixed methods as I became more interested in the detail about individual headteachers' and teachers' perceptions, which cannot be easily or usefully quantified. I wanted to explore heads' views and feelings about the Ofsted criteria and decided that questionnaires would not yield the depth that I was looking for. Cohen et al (2007:349) explain that interview is 'a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard'. Curtis et al (2014:114) consider that 'interviews are a popular research tool within education'. As explained in the next section on methods, I considered that face-to-face semi-structured interviews (Newby, 2010: 340-342; Curtis et al, 2014:114-5) would be the most informative approach as I could observe interviewees' facial expressions and body language. I planned to note any significant expressions or body language during the interviews, such as if interviewees appeared uncomfortable answering a question. In reality I recorded very little of this, partly because of the need to make eye contact with the interviewees and to avoid writing too much and also because there were few times when the body language gave away more than the responses. The next section includes more detail about the interviews.

I decided against gathering any numerical data other than reviewing the Ofsted grades assigned to inspectors' judgements on the quality of teaching. The purpose of reviewing the teaching grade data (see Appendix 10) that Ofsted publishes each year in the Annual Report (for example, Ofsted, 2014h) was simply to notice if and when there were sudden changes in proportions of the different grades, that are currently: 'outstanding'; 'good'; 'requires improvement'; and 'inadequate'. I planned to discuss reasons for the changes with authors of the Ofsted criteria. As the research evolved and in light of the recent changes to the framework (explained below), I concentrated more on topical issues such as the grading of teaching by inspectors and link to performance management, which was brought up by heads and teachers during the interviews.

The main body of research was qualitative in nature as defined by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and based on the epistemological position of interpretivism and an ontological position of constructionism. Bryman (2008: 692) defines constructionism as 'an ontological position that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors'. The observers construct meaning out of their observations and present a specific view rather than a definitive one. Potter (2006:79) suggests that a constructionist ontology views the world as one of 'meanings, represented in the signs and symbols that people use to think and communicate'. Cohen et al (2003:8-23) describe an 'anti-positivistic' viewpoint that employs 'natural, qualitative and interpretive' approaches as alternatives to positivistic ones that apply the so-called 'scientific method'. They suggest that interpretive researchers 'set out to understand the world around them. Theory is emergent and must arise from particular situations'.

Gage (1989:5) describes the difference between 'interpretive researchers' and 'standard researchers' in terms of the former constructing their own 'social reality' rather than 'reality always be the determiner of the individual's perceptions'. He describes interpretive researchers as observers of action, which he defines as 'behaviour plus meaning', rather than just behaviour, which standard researchers (Gage described as 'positivistic and behavioural') focused on. I attempted to apply

the approach of Gage's (1989) interpretive researcher in my analysis of data from the interviews, by seeking to identify the reasons for the various responses and the factors that may have contributed to them.

Having decided on a qualitative methodology, rather than quantitative, the distinction between the two approaches is not as clear-cut as might be first thought (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). Cohen et al (2003: 139) describes how Woods (1992) explains that the differences have been exaggerated from a time when the quantitative method was strictly about hypothetico-deductive testing of theories and qualitative was an inductive way of generating theories.

3.4 Research methods

The research methods included an analysis of policy documents relating to the history of HMI and the introduction of Ofsted and in the period since then from 1992 to the present day. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with key Ofsted actors who were involved in or oversaw the design of the criteria and with headteachers (or in two cases, deputy headteachers who were standing in for the headteachers) and teachers from ten different primary schools.

3.4.1 Analysis of historical policy documents

Cohen et al (2003:159) suggest that historical research is extremely important in the field of education. They say that 'historical study can do much to help us understand how our present educational system came about...and why educational theories and practices developed'. McCulloch (2011: 254) concludes that historical research has 'the capacity to illuminate the past, patterns of continuity and change over time, and the origins of current structures and relationships'. It was in this vein that I studied literature relating to the years preceding the introduction of Ofsted and, in particular, the development of Her Majesty's inspectorate, in order to understand how and why the criteria for teaching were first written for the first inspections in 1993. The period following the

introduction of Ofsted, from 1992 until 2015, was explored in order to identify political and other educational initiatives and developments that may have had an impact on revisions to the Ofsted criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching.

Cohen et al (2011: 249) distinguish between primary and secondary source documents. They define primary documents, as those 'produced as a direct record of an event or process by a witness or subject involved in it'. Secondary documents are defined as those 'formed through an analysis of primary documents to provide an account of the event or process in question'. I reviewed the following primary sources, with a particular focus on any potential impact on inspection criteria: Education laws that defined government policy; reports of Commons Select Committee meetings relating to Ofsted; Ofsted frameworks, schedules and guidance documents from 1993 onwards (when the first Ofsted inspections started). Secondary source documents included: research articles that referred to inspection criteria and approach during this period; and newspaper articles relating to inspection and its impact.

3.4.2. Semi-structured interviews with key actors (HMI) in the design of the criteria

Kvale (2007: 388) describes the interview as 'a conversation that has a structure and a purpose determined by the one party - the interviewer'. He explains the importance of seven stages: thematizing- which is about defining the purpose of the investigation before the interviews start; designing- which is concerned with planning the investigation taking into account the moral implications; interviewing- conducting the interviews according to the plan and with regard for the interpersonal relationships; transcribing- from speech to text; analysing- using the coding approach described later; verifying- deciding on the reliability and validity of the findings; reporting- which is about communicating findings.

I drew on Kvale's (2007) guidance to plan and undertake the interviews, the purpose of which was to find out how a number of Ofsted personnel who were

involved in the preparation of the criteria recalled the influences on the way the criteria were written and changed over time. I attempted to apply all seven of Kvale's stages as there is a clear logic to them. For example, I defined the purpose of the interviews and planned whom to speak to and what questions to ask. The interviews were conducted with awareness of personal relationships and my positionality. The recordings were transcribed; each one took between four and six hours. I verified the transcriptions by sending them to the interviewees with an opportunity for them to make amendments or additions. Three of the four HMI helpfully returned comments that I incorporated into the final transcripts.

The research included semi-structured interviews, as defined by Bryman (2008:196) as contexts in which the interviewer has a general series of questions but is 'able to vary the sequence'. He goes on to suggest that the 'interviewer has some latitude to ask further questions in response to...significant replies'. Cohen et al (2003: 278) contend that semi-structured interviews involve prepared topics and questions but where the 'sequence and wording does not have to be followed with each respondent'. The authors (Cohen et al, 2007: 342) advantages and disadvantages of semi-structured interviews. For example, whilst allowing for the collection of 'rich data' and allowing 'questioning to explore the issue', they are 'time-consuming', expensive and need 'scepticism'. As regards the latter disadvantage, they suggest that the interviewer has good background knowledge and uses follow up questions to explore responses. I chose to include semi-structured interviews as I wanted to ask interviewees some specific questions, but was prepared to explore their responses and to follow up their answers. See appendix 1 for the timetable of interviews and appendix 3 for the interview questions.

The interview method is not without its critics. Hammersley (2003: 119-120) considered some of the criticisms directed at the interview method used in educational research and the 'increasing over-dependence among qualitative researchers on interview data, and above all their use of such data as a window on the world and/or on the minds of informants'. From this I learned to be critical of

my own interpretation of interviewees' responses and to triangulate these with evidence from other sources. To help achieve this I double checked my interpretations and cross-referenced all interviewees' answers against the interview questions to aid objectivity.

I acknowledged the potential pitfalls and challenges associated with interviews, for example, as cited by Cohen et al (2003: 281) from a list by Field and Morse (1989) that includes the need to avoid interruptions and distractions, as well as avoiding asking awkward questions, giving advice or opinions, summarising too soon or being superficial. Kvale (2007:1906) discusses in detail the dilemma of leading questions and concludes that 'the decisive issue is not whether to lead or not, but whether the interview leads to new trustworthy and worthwhile knowledge'. I attempted to avoid these pitfalls by carrying out interviews in a quiet room, although this was not always possible as on two occasions the noise from the playground was captured in the recordings as the interviews took place at lunchtime. The ideal was not always possible to achieve as I had to fit in with headteachers' and teachers' busy schedules. The background noise was not distracting during the interviews but just made the tape harder to transcribe. I followed the main content of each question, but did not read them verbatim as I wanted to maintain eye contact with the interviewee and to establish a rapport. I also wanted to respond to their answers by following up with further questions and sometimes I did not need to ask all of my questions when they had already been answered in response to an earlier one.

The interviews were with four key actors who were involved in preparing or overseeing the writing of the Ofsted evaluation criteria. These actors were either former or current HMI, Ofsted employees who were in senior positions in Ofsted and all could be described as 'authoritative sources' (Newby, 2010: 225). I gave the interviewees the following pseudonyms: Susan, Margaret, John and Robert to preserve anonymity. The purpose of the discussions was to learn what these key actors' recollections were of how the criteria were written, why and how they were

amended, and what political and other influences had influenced the criteria. These discussions helped to answer my first research question.

I distinguished between the political impact on the inspection framework as a whole, for example, on the frequency of inspections or the inclusion of government policy such as *Every Child Matters* (DfES 2004), with the influences on the criteria for evaluating teaching, which was the focus of the research.

At the start of 2014 there were developments in Ofsted that were extremely relevant to my research. The events to which I refer relate to speeches by the Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw (2014a), in which he made it very clear that Ofsted did not have a preferred view of how teachers should teach. He quoted from subsidiary guidance for inspectors (Ofsted, 2014g:18), that was issued in April 2014: 'Inspectors must not give the impression that Ofsted favours a particular teaching style'. He went on to describe some particular teaching styles that should not be promoted or criticised by inspectors, for example, too much 'teacher-talk', or lack of independence by pupils. He added 'On occasions, too, pupils are rightly passive rather than active recipients of learning'.

The written guidance was followed up by several emails from the inspection service providers such as SERCO and Tribal, along with compulsory training for lead inspectors. The training was led by HMI and included sessions on how lead inspectors should guide their teams in judging the quality of teaching and in recording their evidence on evidence forms (EFs). The events could be described as an example of Foucault's 'disciplinary power' (Woods and Jeffrey, 1998: 550) as exerted by Ofsted over the inspection providers and inspectors. The amount and tone of the communication with inspectors suggests an example of Ofsted's 'symbolic violence'.

Because of this recent focus on inspecting teaching, I requested an interview with a current member of Ofsted responsible for overseeing the guidance for inspectors, such as 'Why inspectors observe lessons' (Ofsted, 2014f). This was organised

fairly swiftly. There was a tense moment before the interview when I asked the interviewee to sign the consent form as he expressed concern that the research would be presenting Ofsted in a negative light. Curtis et al (2014:115) and Dawson (2009:73-4) refer to the need to establish a 'rapport' with the interviewee and as such I attempted to reassure him that my intention was not to present negative views about Ofsted but to explore participants' views as objectively as possible.

3.4.3 Thematic semi-structured interviews with 10 primary school headteachers and 19 teachers

The headteachers were interviewed in order to find answers to the research question: How do ten primary headteachers view Ofsted's teaching criteria and use them to influence classroom practice in their schools? I was particularly interested in their perceptions of how the criteria had changed over the years, what had been the influences and how they used the criteria with their teachers. Table 3.1 summarises their length of teaching and headship experience, as well as information about their current schools.

In each of the ten schools where I interviewed the headteacher (or deputy), I conducted paired semi-structured interviews (Curtis et al, 2014:114-5) with teachers who were not necessarily part of the senior leadership team. I wanted to hear the views of classroom teachers, rather than those with leadership responsibilities. As it turned out, the majority of those I spoke to have some sort of responsibility, mostly as 'middle leaders' (see Bennett et al, 2003), leading on subjects or year groups. In all but one of the schools, I interviewed two teachers together. In one case, the other teacher was unwell and unable to join her colleague, so I interviewed her on her own. I attempted to give the teachers some ownership of the research by sending the interview questions beforehand and encouraging them to ask any questions about the research as part of my reflexive collaborative approach (Burke, 2002).

The teachers were interviewed in order to find answers to the fourth research question: How do primary teachers from the headteachers' schools view the Ofsted criteria and use them to influence their own classroom practice? I was particularly interested in their views about the teaching criteria and how they used them to guide their own practice, how they considered that the criteria had changed, what influenced the changes and how the criteria are used in their schools. The questions I asked are included in appendix 3.

The heads (or deputy heads) and teachers have been given pseudonyms to preserve anonymity and these names have been attached to their comments. In one school, I interviewed two co-heads together (as they had requested) and this explains why there are 11 headteacher (or deputy head) names rather than 10.

I was aware that my selection of people to interview was potentially problematic and posed concerns about reflexivity and positionality (Curtis et al, 2014: 177), in that it was based on my personal knowledge and choices. I reconciled this concern with the idea of 'purposeful selection' as defined by Lammert et al (2013:700) has 'a conscious and deliberate method of considering alternative research trajectories created by our choices'. The criteria for my choice of primary headteachers included those:

- Who had experienced at least one Ofsted inspection
- Whose school had been judged to be at least 'requires improvement' (and not special measures or serious weaknesses/ notice to improve)
- Whose schools were known to me mainly through working as a London Challenge adviser (schools that were supporting others or being supported).

My sampling method could be described as 'purposive' (Newby, 2010: 233) and was not intended to allow me to arrive at a general conclusion for all headteachers or teachers. As mentioned above, I identified around 14 schools' whose

headteachers and teachers I planned to interview and knew many more if needed. Using what Corbin and Strauss (2008:142-147) refer to as 'theoretical sampling', that is the number of interviews being responsive to the data rather than being pre-determined. I decided not to interview headteachers of schools in special measures because I felt that they would be under a lot of pressure and public scrutiny without me adding to this. Also, I believed that their views may be different from those of headteachers whose schools had received a more favourable outcome.

As a result of the criteria, all but one school was based in inner or outer London boroughs. I chose one school outside London to provide some contrast to the others. The headteachers' leadership experience varied, as did their experience of being inspected. I approached the interviews from a Bourdieuan perspective of reflexivity (for example, see Grenfell, 2012; Swartz, 1997:11; Wacquant, 1989). The headteachers I chose to interview were initially all known to me—mainly from working with me when I was a London Challenge Adviser. Several were national and local leaders of education (primary headteachers who have been trained to support other schools either locally or nationally). The advantage of contacting people I knew was that in all but one case they replied positively to being interviewed and agreed for two members of their teaching staff to be interviewed as well. In the one case, the headteacher replied to say that she was off on long term sick leave. I eventually interviewed headteachers and teachers from ten schools as I considered that I had reached a point where I was not gathering any new data. I was conscious of the disadvantages of insider research and followed Mercer's (2007:13) advice about not revealing my 'own opinions about the research topic' during the interviews.

Of the ten headteachers I eventually interviewed, I only knew seven. One headteacher was sick on the day I arrived and she asked her deputy to stand in for her. Two of the other headteachers were in acting positions or new in post (in the case of the only non-London school). In one school there were two co-heads and they asked to be interviewed together. I had not met any of the teachers before

apart from the two that were involved in the pilot. I found that whether interviewees knew me beforehand or not did not seem to affect how readily they responded; as borne out by the length of their answers. In some ways it was easier for me to interview people I did not know well, because I felt that my approach was not then influenced (even subconsciously) by any prior knowledge I had of them.

The headteachers' (or alternates') experience ranged from under a year to over 20 years as headteacher. Although their years of experience differed, the headteachers could be said to share a common 'institutional habitus' based on their 'cultural capital' as defined by Bourdieu (Swartz, 1997: 75) in terms of their positions of authority in the school and community. Similarly, the teachers, who were mostly not on the leadership scale, had experience that ranged from a year to over 30 years. Table 3.1 summarises the range of experience of the headteachers and the context of the schools, which could have an impact on their 'institutional habitus'.

I was aware that as interviewer my positionality had an impact on the interviewee and how he/she responded (see section 3.5). Dunscombe (1998:116) says that research has demonstrated 'fairly conclusively that people respond differently depending on how they perceive the person asking the questions'. The interviewees who knew me and what my job has been may have been inclined to tailor their answers to what they thought I wanted to hear. As Dunscombe (1998: 117) says, 'there is a limit to what can be done about this'. I attempted to counter this by encouraging interviewees to be as honest as possible and emphasising that my role was not to judge or evaluate their responses and that I was genuinely interested in what they had to say. They had nothing to gain from telling me what they thought I wanted to hear as I was not inspecting their schools. Before each interview started I explained my role to interviewees and that I was not acting as an inspector. I encouraged them to answer honestly and told them that their names would not be used in the report or to the headteacher, drawing on ethical guidelines (for example, Curtis et al, 2014: 186-187, Newby, 2010: 357-8) and advice on anonymity and confidentiality. I gave interviewees the opportunity to ask

their questions about the research before I began asking the questions, which had been sent in advance.

Table 3.1 Interviewee headteachers' experience and context of schools

	School location	Started teaching	Length of time as head	Last Ofsted inspection*	Ofsted judgement of the school	Context of the school
a	Outer London	1993	3 years	June 2013	RI (with good leadership and management)	2 to 3 fe Average % ME pupils. Average % FSM. High mobility
b	Outer London	1989	9 years	May 2011	Good	3 or 4 fe Well above av % ME
c	Outer London	1984	21 years	June 2008	Outstanding	1 fe Below av % FSM. V high % ME and EAL
d	Inner London	2004	Deputy for 1 year	May 2008	Outstanding	1 fe Well above average FSM and deprivation. High % ME pupils
e	Outer London	1987	5 years	June 2013	Good	High %ME pupils. Large. Below average for FSM. ASD unit
f	Outer London	1995	5 years	June 2013	RI	2 – 3 fe Above average % FSM Above av % ME High deprivation
g	Outer London	1976 and 1987	Two co-heads One head for 20 years, the other co-head for 6 years.	Oct 2011	Good	3 fe Above average % ME Above average % FSM
h	Inner London	1991	4 years plus 2 years acting head in previous school.	Sep 2012	Good	2 fe V high % ME. High FSM
i	Outer London	1995	Deputy head	Nov 2012	Good	4 fe (>> average) Just < NA for FSM Above av for ME and EAL.
j	County	2001	Less than one year	Nov 2009	Good	2 fe Very low % ME, below average FSM
<p>[Key: fe= forms of entry; ME= minority ethnic pupils; FSM= free school meals (proxy measure of disadvantage); EAL= English as an additional language; ASD= autistic spectrum disorder; NA= national average; RI= requires improvement]</p> <p>* At the time of the interview</p>						

Cohen et al (2003) refer to techniques that will help to make the interview process as effective as possible. For example, he suggests anticipating possible problems

by choosing a suitable venue, avoiding distractions and interruptions, listening actively, avoiding giving advice or summarising too early. The authors draw on the quality criteria devised by Kvale (1996:145) for the 'ideal interview', which include suggestions such as: shorter questions and longer answers; following up answers and clarifying meaning; verifying interpretations of the interviewee's responses. The transcriptions verified that around 80% of the speech was from the interviewees. I did occasionally have to ask questions to clarify the meaning and to follow up responses with supplementary questions. I tried to ensure that questions flowed smoothly, were not repetitive and therefore more interesting for participants.

Pilot study

I undertook pilot interviews in order to try out the questions and, if necessary make any adjustments. Pilot interviews were conducted for the three different interviewee types: former Ofsted employees; headteachers; and teachers. In each case, the interviewees were asked before the start of the interview if they had any questions about the research or interview process. Following the pilot interviews, the questions were modified slightly, for example to remove a question that seemed to duplicate an earlier one. I also included an additional starter question about the experience of the interviewees in terms of how long they had been teaching or had been a headteacher or when they were in Ofsted. This was considered important as I believed that it might have an impact on their views on the criteria, though I did not have a preconceived view of this. Wilkins (2011: 389- 405) refers to 'post-performative' teachers who have grown up in the era of the National Curriculum and Ofsted and have not known anything else. He found that they had a more relaxed view towards the many accountability measures that they encounter, including Ofsted inspections. I was interested to find out if my interviewees responded in the same way during the interviews.

The headteachers were interviewed initially followed by two teachers in their schools. The context of the schools and latest Ofsted outcome were considered to possibly have a bearing on the headteachers' perception and this was explored in

the semi-structured interviews (Curtis et al., 2014). Ofsted (2015g :3) has reported that the views of headteachers whose schools were judged inadequate 'tended to be more negative than those of schools with higher (i.e. requires improvement, good or outstanding) inspection judgements'. I decided not to interview heads of schools judged to be inadequate for reasons given in section 3.4.4 below.

I decided in the pilot interviews to speak to the two teachers together rather than separately. I did this for a number of reasons: Firstly, to save time as each interview lasted up to an hour and the teachers' and my time was limited. Secondly, I reasoned that it might make the interview more interesting for the teachers as they could hear the views of a colleague. I also thought that it might be less threatening for them. When asked afterwards, the two teachers both commented that they had found the experience enjoyable and better because they were together, which gave them, as one teacher said, 'thinking time' while their colleague answered a question. Newby (2010: 349) refers to pair or dual interviews and quotes from Highet (2003) saying that the 'pair approach provided emotional support for the participants in talking about a sensitive issue'. My research questions were not particularly sensitive, but it was clear from the way the teachers responded that they welcomed having a colleague share the discussion. Highet (2003) also noted that having a pair achieved a 'better balance in the power relationship between interviewer and interviewees'.

3.4.4 Selection of sample and the generalisability of the research

My approach to sampling was 'purposive' as described by Punch and Oancea (2014), who draw on Miles and Huberman (1994) to illustrate the wide variety of types of sampling in qualitative research. Cohen et al (2011:153) differentiate between probability and non-probability sampling, with purposive sampling falling into the latter category; 'some members of the wider population definitely will be excluded...' I chose headteachers to interview based on what Arthur et al (2012: 49) call 'typical case sampling' (Patton, 1990), by which is meant choosing cases that represent what is typical. I chose headteachers in schools that had been

judged 'requires improvement', 'good' or 'outstanding', which are the most common judgements from inspection. I avoided schools judged to be 'inadequate' as there are typically far fewer of these (around 2 % of primary schools), whereas around 18% are outstanding, 64% are good and 16% 'require improvement'. I also avoided 'inadequate' schools (i.e. those judged to be in special measures or to have serious weaknesses) because I felt that these schools did not need any extra pressure or stress. There has also been a reasonable amount of research into schools in special measures (for example, Perryman, 2002 and 2005). I also used 'convenience sampling' (Arthur et al, 2012) by choosing headteachers who were mainly known to me, so who were more likely to agree to being interviewed. In addition, schools were located in and around London for practical reasons, which entailed journeys of under an hour each way.

Similarly, the sample of teachers was purposive in that I asked to speak to those who were not members of the senior leadership team. I was aiming to target classroom teachers who did not have overall leadership and management roles, in order to hear their views, which I believed might be different from the headteachers. In reality, most of the teachers had some responsibility as a subject or phase coordinator or SENCO.

Newby's (2014: 252) description of 'quota sampling' would also be apt for the way that I identified the sample of headteachers to interview. I mapped out the names of over 20 primary schools in the West London area that were known to me and selected from this list those that matched the criterion: not in an Ofsted category (i.e. special measures or serious weaknesses). I identified 14 headteachers that I could interview, and contacted them initially to ask if they were willing to participate in the research. All replied but one indicated that she was off on long term sick leave and it was not appropriate to include her. I arranged dates and times for the interviews with 10 headteachers and asked to speak with two teachers on the same day. The headteachers were tasked with selecting the teachers, based on the criterion that they were not part of the senior leadership team (SLT); Newby

(2014: 254) describes such an approach of referral as 'snowball sampling'. The response from headteachers was positive and most of the interviews were organised during May and June 2014, when I set aside time from my 'day job' to undertake the interviews. I decided to stop arranging further interviews after 10, when I considered that I was not learning anything new from the interviewees (Check and Schutt, 2012).

The sample I chose for the HMI and former HMI interviews could also be described as purposive or 'specialist group sampling' (Newby, 2014: 255) or 'knowledgeable people' (Cohen et al., 2011:157). I picked former HMI who I believed to have been associated with or directly involved in writing Ofsted's criteria for teaching. In two cases I knew the former HMI as I had worked with them, and I had to travel several 100 miles in each case to meet with them.

I was not intending to get a representative sample of former HMI, but merely wanted to hear the views of some who were involved at an early stage. The other two HMI and former HMI could be described as an opportunistic sample (Punch and Oancea, 2014: 212), in that I identified one interviewee during an Ofsted training session after I heard that she was involved in preparing the criteria. The fourth interviewee was selected for me ('criterion sampling') by Ofsted when I asked to speak to an HMI involved in the latest framework (at that time).

Bryman (2008: 391-2) says that findings from research using interviews cannot be generalized to other settings. The interviewees were not chosen to be representative of a particular population, although did meet criteria (as explained above). Bryman (2008) adds that the findings can be generalised into theory rather than to populations. He quotes from Mitchell (1983: 207) in concluding that it is the 'quality of the theoretical inferences... that are crucial to the assessment or generalization'. He suggests that this view is not universal. Williams (2000:215) argues that researchers can make *moderatum generalisations*, in which aspects of the study can be 'seen to be instances of a broader set of recognisable features'.

In relation to my research, the sample of headteachers and teachers was not expected to represent a wider group or all headteachers and teachers. However, many of their comments are similar to that reported by other researchers (see, for example, Clapham, 2014; Roberts, 2015; Rosenthal, 2003; Scanlon, 1999; Waterman, 2014) and thus the conclusions can be said to be moderatum generalisations. Also, the theoretical interpretation of the findings in terms of the Bourdieuan analysis would, I hope, have much wider significance than simply being applied to the small groups of interviewees. Cohen et al (2011:242) quote Strauss and Corbin (1990:267) who describe 'explanatory power' as an alternative to generalisability, in the 'context of the research and wider contexts'. They conclude by suggesting that the solution (to the issue of generalisability) is to 'regard the research as raising working hypotheses rather than conclusions'. This might be an apt description of some of the points I have raised in the concluding chapters.

3.5 Positionality, reflexivity and ethical considerations

Bourdieu suggests (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 39) that the researcher's biases 'may blur the sociological gaze'. He describes different types of bias; of which I consider two are relevant. First, the social origins of the researcher (class, gender, ethnicity etc.), which can be 'controlled ...by means of mutual and self-criticism'. Swartz (1997: 272) says that 'For Bourdieu, reflexivity first of all means developing critical awareness of the class lens through which one views the social world'. In respect of my research, in addition to my 'class lens', I needed to be aware of my 'inspection lens'. The third bias, which Wacquant (1992: 39) says is the most original to Bourdieu's notion of reflexivity, is that of 'intellectualist bias' or what Swartz (1997: 273) calls the 'theoreticist bias inherent in the scholarly gaze, and in the intellectual posture itself'. He adds that this is the most difficult bias to overcome and involves 'examining the epistemological and social conditions that make possible social-scientific claims of objectivity' and that 'Bourdieu does not believe that a fully reflexive view can be achieved'.

Burke (2012:73) emphasises the importance of researchers understanding their own position and perspective and 'how these shape the research design, data collection and analysis and the ways that knowledge is produced in and through the research'. She goes on to link reflexivity and ethics:

Reflexivity is a powerful methodological tool that places ethics at the heart of research practice, and that demands that researchers interrogate the values, assumptions and perspectives they bring to meaning-making processes. (Burke, 2012:83)

I was aware from the outset that my own role and experience were extremely important. I was an HMI from 1991 to 2000, which included the very significant introduction of Ofsted in 1992. I have continued to inspect schools with two of the inspection service providers and have kept up-to-date with current developments and all the necessary training. Alongside inspections, I provide advice and support to individual schools and help 'train' senior teachers in how to observe lessons and judge quality. The issue of reflexivity was therefore extremely significant throughout my research. Curtis et al (2014:177) refer to 'insider research' and suggest that researchers need to consider their position as regards the context of the research and 'most notably, the quality of reflexivity', although 'quality' is not defined. Marshall and Rossman (2011) describe how the researcher's identity, background and experiences impact on the research process. Curtis et al (2014:194) draw on Atkinson and Hammersley (1989) to suggest that 'reflexivity means that we acknowledge that we are part of the social world that we are studying. and as such our identity can influence the research process'. Curtis et al (2014) continue by suggesting that the interviewer is in a position of power at all points during the research, from the choice of questions through to writing up the findings, which can be 'skewed'. Burke (2012: 72) states that 'hearing and representing are key concepts for the researcher to examine and interrogate'. Burke's advice was very relevant to my research. I attempted to be conscious of my 'position of power' throughout the interviews, the transcriptions and analysis. I sent interviewees

transcripts of their interviews and invited them to suggest changes or additions. I also sent them the relevant data analysis chapters and asked for comment; I received helpful comments back from three HMI.

Curtis et al (2014: 181) cite Glesne and Peshkin (1992) who describe four types of position or 'dramaturgical' role that researchers can assume: Exploiter ...manipulator of information; Intervener/reformer...having dangerous knowledge that could potentially damage individuals or organisations; advocate...for the interviewees point of view; and friend...where interviewees reveal more because of friendship. Of these, I felt that I could fall into the friend, advocate and exploiter roles. Most of the headteacher interviewees were known to me and hence fall into the friendship and familiarity category. I had my own views on what I would find and unwittingly could have used this to influence the interview and follow up questions, to interpret what interviewees said and the importance I attached to their comments. I did not want to advocate my own view during the interviews, although I found myself inwardly agreeing with some of their sentiments and feeling the need to share these with persons of influence, such as in Ofsted. I was also concerned by some of their responses which represented an inaccurate view of the current inspection framework and how they would be inspected. I did not comment during the interview, but once finished I explained to them what the current Ofsted position was. I felt I had a moral obligation to dispel their misunderstandings. (ESRC, 2012 and Punch, 2009). Participants were also sent copies of the transcripts of the interview for amendment if necessary, as advised as good practice by Rowley (2012).

Cohen et al (2003: 279) reminds us that the interview is a 'social, interpersonal encounter' and the need to conduct an interview 'carefully and sensitively'. I have a great deal of experience of interviewing as part of my role as an Ofsted inspector. I was reflexively aware during the interviews of my own positionality (as defined by Curtis et al, 2014: 177-178). I felt that it was best to stay neutral during the interviews, to say little and to ask open ended question. However, sometimes I

shared my own views when the interview had been completed (as explained above).

Rossetto (2014: 482- 489) describes the importance of ethical considerations and the benefits of research to the participants:

it is still imperative to consider the potential benefits of the qualitative research process for participants if we are to fully understand the value of our research and conduct it responsibly.

The research described by Rossetto (2014) is of a clinical nature and likely to be more personal than mine but nevertheless, is still relevant. Burke (2002) describes an approach that she calls reflexive collaboration, which involves joint participation in the research, and gives some ownership to those being researched. My research involved participants sharing their emotions about the Ofsted criteria and I thought it would help them if I sent the questions beforehand. This turned out to be very useful as it gave the interviewees time to reflect and many came to the interviews with notes on the question sheet. In one case the teachers said that they had discussed the questions beforehand; this aided the interview. In one school where the teachers had not received the questions, which I had sent to the headteacher, I found I had to prompt more and their answers were less fluent.

Ethical considerations

I considered the ethical issues raised by the research in terms of the six principles as set out in the Framework for Research Ethics (ESRC, 2012: 2-3) and in BERA (2011) and summarised below:

- 1) Research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency

Participants who were interviewed for the research – former Ofsted employees and primary school headteachers and teachers – were made aware of the purpose of the research and what questions they would be asked prior to the interviews. Information and questions were sent a week or more in advance of the interviews. Slight changes were made to the questions after the three pilot interviews: with a former HMI, headteacher and two primary teachers.

- 2) Research staff and participants must normally be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.

Participants were given a brief outline of the research on the consent form, sent in advance (see appendix 2). They were told about the purpose and outcomes of the research- i.e. the thesis, summary reports and presentations that I might give in relation to the research findings. They were told that they would remain anonymous and the outcomes of the research would not identify individuals or their schools, in the case of the teachers and headteachers. Participants were told that they could decline from answering any questions about which they have concerns. I offered them the opportunity to ask any questions about the research before I started the interview.

All participants were invited to give informed consent through signing a form. They were sent drafts of the interview transcript and section of the thesis research paper relevant to their responses and asked to give their consent again. At all stages they are given the option of withdrawing their consent.

- 3) The confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected.

All participants were told that their comments would be confidential and their names withheld. However, I did consider that it would be beneficial to the

credibility of the research if I could give an indication of the roles of the former Ofsted employees. I eventually decided against this, in view of the need for anonymity, and simply stated that they were senior HMI, although was told that this term has significance in Ofsted, so was careful how I used it. I did indicate when they were in post, as this was relevant to their comments on, and involvement in writing, the criteria.

- 4) Research participants must take part voluntarily, free from any coercion.

Participants were invited to take part and not coerced. There was no financial or other incentive provided, apart from a cup of tea or coffee. In general, I knew most of the participants and I made it very clear that they did not have to participate and that they could withdraw at any time. Participants were all asked to complete and sign a consent form.

- 5) Harm to research participants must be avoided in all instances.

I did not consider that the research was likely to cause interviewees any physical or mental harm as their involvement was only through meetings where I posed a number of questions.

- 6) The independence of research must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit.

The independence of the research was made clear to the participants (Burgess, 1995 and Simons and Usher, 2000). A number of participants asked if I was doing the research on behalf of Ofsted, to which I answered 'no'. Most knew that I was a former HMI and so have prior knowledge and insight into the workings of Ofsted. I explained that I was not approaching the research with a predetermined view or hypothesis. Clearly I had my own views but aimed to keep quiet about these during the interviews and beforehand so as not to influence the participants. It was

important to phrase questions in such a way as to come across as objective and impartial as possible.

3.6 Analysis of the data

3.6.1 Introduction

'Analysis is the act of giving meaning to data' (Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 64). Based on a grounded theory method, they describe a process of analysis that starts with a 'microanalysis' that explores all possibilities. This is followed by interpretations of the data that are more general and based around concepts and 'conceptual ordering', which is explained as 'classifying events and objects along variously explicitly stated dimensions'.

The data gathered for this research comprised interviews with: four former/ current HMI; 10 primary headteachers; and 19 primary teachers (in nine pairs and one solo). The names of all the interviewees, their schools and roles were kept anonymous to ensure confidentiality. Along with data from the interviews, the literature review includes an analysis of Ofsted's inspection guidance and criteria for evaluating teaching, between 1993 (the first Ofsted inspections) and July 2015. The political contexts between 1992 (when Ofsted was introduced) and the current day (2015) were examined to determine any possible political influences on the teaching criteria.

Emerging themes were identified during and after the interviews and included as sub-headings for the data analyses. The themes differed slightly for the three interviewee groups.

I also attempted to interpret the data in terms of a Bourdieuan analysis, from the perspective of habitus, capital and field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The

positions of HMI, headteachers and teachers in what I have called the ‘field of inspection’ are considered in terms of their responses to the interview questions.

I interviewed three former and one current HMI (schools) in order to help answer the first two research questions: how have Ofsted’s criteria for evaluating and grading teaching changed over the years; and, what have been the key policy drivers and learning theory influences? I gave all the interviewees pseudonyms to preserve anonymity.

English and Bolton (2015: 10) reproduced a figure from Bourdieu and Passeron’s ‘Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture’, which depicts the relational field of educational interests. This figure shows the hierarchy of agents in the field and how those with ‘pedagogic authority’ (which is Ofsted and HMI) impose ‘their version of how the world should work’. I have attempted to produce a version of the relational field as it pertains to Ofsted inspections. My version of the relational inspection field is shown below.

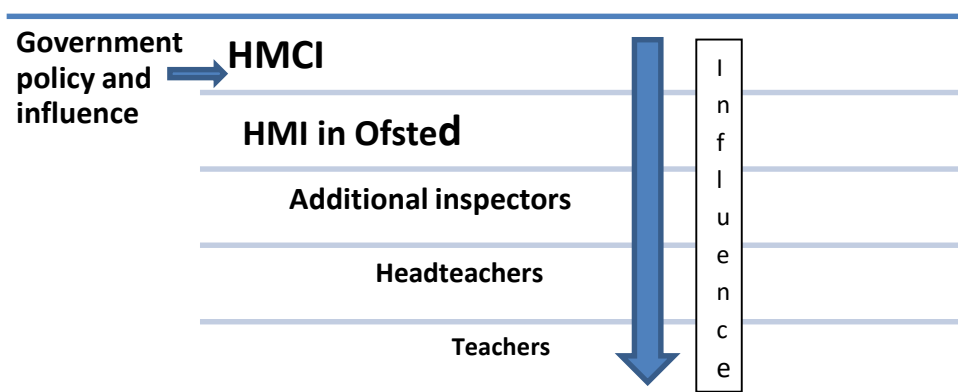


Figure 3.2: The relational field of inspection

In the figure, the chief inspector (HMCI) is at the top because he/she has the most authority and symbolic capital. He/she experiences directives about inspection frameworks from policy makers (government), which, as interviewees noted, had most influence on the broad structure of the inspection framework rather than the detail of the criteria. Until 2012, there was no explicit justification of the criteria,

which were based mainly on HMIs' understanding and experience of good practice. Thus HMI within Ofsted wield a great deal of symbolic power to define what is meant by good teaching. Headteachers have to interpret the criteria for teachers. Headteachers exert power over teachers by using the Ofsted criteria to monitor lessons and manage teachers' performance. Teachers are at the bottom of the hierarchy in the field, with relatively little symbolic capital, and are likely to experience the most stress before and during an inspection.

I have included additional inspectors in the figure. These are persons who are not employed directly by Ofsted, but lead or team on inspections through contracts with the ISPs. These additional inspectors are in positions of authority over schools, but they are arguably subject to 'symbolic violence' from Ofsted. Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 167) said that 'symbolic violence ...is the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity.' He continues that 'social agents are knowing agents who even when they are subject to determinisms, contribute to producing the efficacy of that which determines them...'. Additional inspectors are expected to interpret the criteria, although they have not written them. They are at the sharp end of inspections and, in my experience, want to give a fair and honest judgement on the schools they inspect. At the same time, they are subject to a great quantity of guidance and rules from the ISPs and Ofsted that, since 2012, change on an almost weekly basis. They rarely complain openly because of the risk of losing paid work. I speak from personal experience as an additional inspector since 2009 working with two of the ISPs, SERCO and Tribal. Additional inspectors were not interviewed for this research, but their perceptions could be the focus for further research, particularly after Ofsted takes over the management of inspections from September 2015.

Newby (2010: 459-460) describes a process for the analysis of qualitative data, which starts with taking the data at face value ('manifest analysis') before interpreting it ('interpretive analysis'). The process is explained in the following diagram (Figure 3.3):

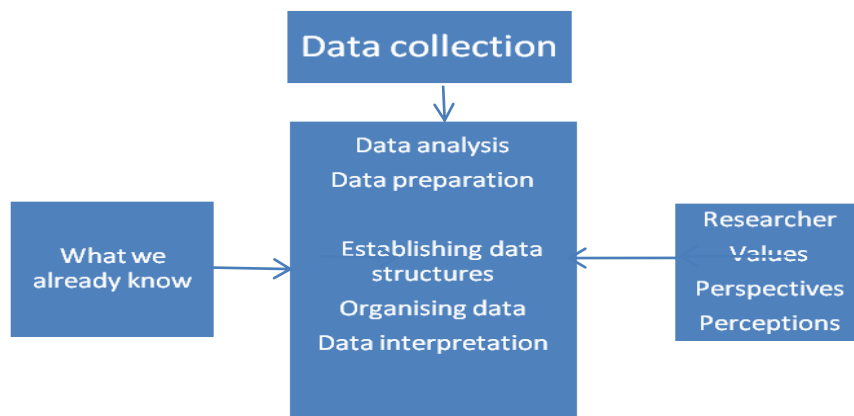


Figure 3.3 The data analysis process (Newby, 2010: 460, fig 11.1)

Both descriptions follow a similar pattern, with a gradually more general interpretation following the detailed analysis. In both accounts the perceptions, experiences and views of the researcher are considered. Corbin and Strauss (2008: 32-34) use the term 'sensitivity' (of the researcher to the research) and say that 'objectivity in qualitative research is a myth'. They suggest that it is necessary to have some background in order to be able to make sense of data and to 'discern important connections between concepts'. This idea is particularly relevant to my research because of my extensive experience as an inspector and over 30 years in education, which I drew on to design the research and to interpret the data, being conscious all the while of my potential bias and subjectivity.

Jenkins (2002: 61-62) notes how Bourdieu considers the importance of reflexivity and the need to subject the researcher to 'the same critical and sceptical eye as the practice of the researched'. Elliott et al (2013:434) explore the use of reflexivity in psychoanalytic research and discuss its limitations and uses. They discuss the ethical position of the researcher as that which:

involves accepting that any account is necessarily partial, is always provisional and open to question. Such a position underlines the

importance in research of not wrapping up data too quickly, and persisting with aspects that may disturb or conflict with prior assumptions.

I considered that my approach to data analysis would involve being open about my experience and possible bias throughout the text, where relevant.

Kvale (2007:2139) states, in relation to data arising from interviews, that the analysis method should be built into the interviews themselves, from the outset. He describes how new meanings can be uncovered during the interviews themselves, from the point of view of interviewer and interviewees. Indeed, this was evident in a number of my interviews, where teachers said, 'I had not thought of it like that before', and several headteachers said that they were going to rethink how they graded observations. These revelations seemed to be based on their own thinking aloud as they answered my questions and not as a result of anything I said.

3.6.2 Transcriptions of the interviews

Cohen et al (2003:281-2) state that transcribing is a 'crucial step' and describe the many pitfalls of transcription. They say that in transcribing, one loses the sense of a social encounter and much of the non-verbal communication is lost.

'Transcriptions inevitably lose data from the original encounter' and because of this the data are 'already interpreted' once they become transcribed. They advise the researcher to record other kinds of data during the interview, such as the tone of voice, emphasis, pauses, interruptions etc. Because of these concerns, I took notes during the interviews of key points raised by interviewees and any non-verbal clues that I felt were important at the time. I also took a few notes of what was said as a back-up in case the recording failed to work as it was not easy to see that the recording light was still on.

Newby (2010) describes how researchers need to consider preparing data for analysis. My data was in the form of 24 interviews recorded digitally and transferred to a computer. Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and an hour

and resulted in a total of over 120,000 words. I began by personally transcribing the first few interviews but secured the services of a friend and family member to complete the majority of the rest. I asked them to ignore words such as 'um', 'er' and 'you know' which featured heavily in some cases in order to reduce the amount of transcription. I did not feel that omitting these pauses would affect the meaning as the focus was not on linguistic style (Kvale, 2007: 2029). Newby (2010: 537) advises the use of '...' to represent long pauses and silences during the transcription. When I went through the tapes myself I added comments where appropriate- such as 'paused to reflect on the answer'. Newby (2010: 461) says that it 'is legitimate not to use data that is not relevant to our question'. In one transcription I omitted a short section of an interview with a former Ofsted employee, where she described at length work she was involved in that was interesting but not relevant to the research.

The typists said that it took between 5 and 10 hours to transcribe the recordings; approximately 300 hours in total including my time in editing all of the transcripts (as described below). It was particularly difficult for them when I interviewed two teachers together as sometimes their voices were hard to distinguish. Background noise was a problem in a few cases. Although I delegated the task of typing the transcripts for three-quarters of the interviews to others, I still went through each one because the 'typists' did not understand some of the educational jargon and some of the text that they could not hear properly (due to sound quality). Kvale (2007) recommends this second check for reliability of the transcription. As I had been at the interviews and had recorded some notes, I was able to fill in the missing words. This also gave me a better insight into what had been said.

3.6.3 Analysis and use of Nvivo software

The analysis was carried out manually. I attended a brief Nvivo training session, but decided not to use this software as the main method of data analysis. The software was used simply to confirm certain choices of themes and for word frequency identification. I did not find it particularly helpful beyond that, in view of

my unfamiliarity with the software and lack of time to master it. Newby (2010: 478) reports that the use of software packages (such as Nvivo) has 'led to concerns about their potential to distance a researcher from their data'.

3.6.4 My approach to analysis of the data

Punch and Oancea (2014: 219) suggest that there is no 'single right way' to analyse data. They describe qualitative analysis as 'a process of continuous search for patterns and explication of their meaning, through progressive focusing, reflexive iteration and grounded interpretation, which aims to generate rich accounts of the phenomena studied (and link them to literature)'. This description represents a good reflection of my approach to the analysis of data from interviews with 10 headteachers, 4 former or current HMI and 19 teachers.

Newby (2010:459) describes how data can be analysed in terms of different levels. He suggests that the data should firstly be prepared in a form that can be manipulated. I achieved this by transcribing the interviews as described above. I converted the text into a table to delineate the questions and answers to make it easier to undertake the next stage which was what Newby (2010) refers to as 'tagging', that is attaching codes next to data in a second column (see appendix 12 for an example of how this was done for one interview). I undertook a thematic data analysis after this first stage because I asked questions in mainly the same order. Sometimes this changed when interviewees' responses covered questions I had planned to ask later. The codes I used could be described as 'descriptive' (Miles and Huberman, 1994:55-72 in Newby, 2010) in that the data was taken at face value and sometimes interpreted. Saldana (2013:3) describes codes as a 'word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data'; a definition that I followed.

I picked out codes that went beyond the themes of the questions and represented an interesting observation or point raised by the interviewee. For example, I identified 'context/ timeframe', 'Link to the Teachers Standards', 'pilot inspections', 'performativity' from the interview with former HMI Susan. I included some 'in-vivo' codes (Corbin and Strauss, 2008:65). Patton (2002) suggests that inclusion of participants' own words helps to strengthen the credibility of qualitative research. I included many examples of verbatim text (with omissions of some 'ums' and 'you knows') in the final data analysis chapters.

During the coding process, I also applied 'memoing' (Punch and Oancea, 2014: 229), which involved jotting down ideas about codes and relationships that struck me during the process or fresh ideas that I had not considered prior to the interviews (Punch and Oancea, 2014: 229 quoting from Miles and Huberman, 1994: 72 and Glaser, 1978:83-84). I recorded these 'memos' at the end of the coded transcripts and followed some up with further literature review. For example, several interviewees referred to the PISA tests (OECD, 2010) and I looked up references to these. The idea that it was harder to get a good Ofsted inspection outcome in a school serving a deprived community was raised by a number of interviewees, albeit indirectly, and I followed this up with research into literature and an analysis of Ofsted outcomes by areas of disadvantage.

Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) describe how to link categories of codes to specific questions, which is how I undertook the next stage of the process. I reviewed all of the data and the codes and existing themes (based on the research questions) and then produced a list of themes for each of the three interview types (i.e. HMI, headteachers and teachers) as they differed slightly although the research questions were broadly the same. Boyatzis (1998:161, in Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006:83) defined a theme as 'a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon'.

The themes were reviewed during the process and further subdivided after discussions with my supervisors, to ensure that they were linked to the research questions and not resulting in overly-long chapters, for example. The table in appendix 15 illustrates part of the process used to analyse data from interviews with teachers. The analysis involved further literature review and these are indicated in italics in the third column in the table.

Prior to deciding on the analysis chapter content headings, I organised the data according to broad themes –18 themes –that arose from my first two stages of analysis. I devised a template that was an excel spreadsheet with these 18 themes in column 1. I searched through the coded transcripts and copied and pasted relevant data into the appropriate thematic row. At this point the data was transferred verbatim and two spread sheets were needed for the teachers' interviews because of the number of respondents. I did not include all of the data, because as Newby (2010) indicated that it is not necessary to include all of the data; being selective is a key part of the process. However, I only omitted text that was not relevant to my research questions or themes (such as when a former HMI described in detail how she worked with local authorities in the early days- which was very interesting but not relevant for this research). Some interviewees' responses furnished a wide range of information and led to more themes, whereas other questions were less informative. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006:82) describe how they used a template in the form of codes in order to organise the text from their research. They developed the template from the research question and theoretical framework. I developed the template from themes emerging from the interview questions and codes from an analysis of the data as well as my theoretical framework and key concepts such as performativity.

Having organised the data into the themes, I analysed the data and moved to what Punch and Oancea (2014: 230) describe as 'abstracting' by beginning to interpret the data in terms of general ideas and Bourdieuan concepts. For example, I linked teachers' responses to inspection and feelings of stress and lack of control to their

position at the bottom of the 'field of inspection'. I used examples of interviewee's responses to illustrate ideas that I had abstracted from data within a given theme. Whilst this process took place, further themes sometimes emerged, whilst some were ignored, such as a focus issues to do with the inspection of early years.

In short, the process enabled me to identify and refine themes emerging from the interviews. In many cases, some common points emerged and these were included in the analysis. The process was lengthy but enabled me to be totally personally engaged with the data rather than relying on software, as a result I became very familiar with it.

3.7 How the research was operationalised

Table 3.2 below outlines the broad timeline for my research activities. It started with the identification and refinement of the research questions, through to contacting headteachers and former HMI to interview. The latter parts of the timeline include the interviews themselves (with dates given in appendix 1) and finally the data analysis and completion of the thesis.

Table 3.2 Timeline of the research

Dates	Activities
Oct 2011 to Oct 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing research questions and RDB2 application and revisions • Ethics application • Attending methods seminars and workshops • Library research training • Literature review
Oct to Dec 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacting potential interviewees • Arranging dates for interviews • Literature review continued

January to February 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot interviews- school and former HMI
March to May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revising interview questions/ further literature review
May to July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews (see appendix 1)
August to December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcribing interviews • Nvivo training • Methodology chapter
Jan to Feb 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodology chapter continued • Upgrade interview
March to August 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of data • Writing the thesis

3.8 Summary

This chapter on methodology represents my journey of learning and discovery. I identified and attempted to apply a theoretical framework that draws on Bourdieuan concepts such as habitus, field and symbolic capital. The methodology is firmly based in a constructionist ontology and interpretive epistemology (Cohen et al, 2007). I decided on a qualitative approach because of my interest in exploring key actors' understandings (Tesch,1990). I considered that interviews would provide a greater insight into their views than through questionnaires. I was conscious of my own significant role in the selection and analysis of data (Denscombe,1998), my positionality as an 'insider' (Curtis et al, 2014: 177) and the need for reflexivity.

My methods included a review of historical documents (McCulloch, 2011) into the background behind the formation of Ofsted and how the criteria changed over the years since the first inspections in 1993. The main sources of first-hand data were semi-structured interviews with former or current Ofsted HMI involved in writing or developing the criteria used by Ofsted inspectors to judge the quality of teaching. I sought some practitioners' views of the criteria by interviewing ten headteachers

(or their deputies) and teachers from their schools, mainly in pairs. I applied some ideas from a grounded theory method (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), but not the full method. My intention was not to arrive at a theory but rather to 'stop after concept identification and development and do a very nice descriptive study...' (Corbin and Strauss (2008:162). The coding and analysis was carried out manually.

In the next chapter I give an account of the analysis of the interview data and how it can be interpreted in terms of the interview questions and the theoretical framework. The full analysis of historical policy documents is included in the literature review section. However, I have referred to this analysis in the next chapter as well, in relation to the links with responses from former Ofsted employees. I attempted to draw conclusions and common themes from the data.

Ofsted is currently in the limelight in a way that has possibly not been seen since the time of Chris Woodhead (Ofsted Chief Inspector from 1994 to 2000). The next chapter includes some references to current developments with the Ofsted framework and criteria, including the impact of the change of government after May 2015. These developments came after the interviews took place (in 2014) and I considered that they should be incorporated into the commentary.

Chapter 4 Analysis of interviews with current and former HMI

4.1 Introduction

The interviewees were appointed as HMI in 1984, 1989, 2003 and 2006. Three of them retired or resigned from Ofsted in 2004, 2008, and 2012. They had a breadth of experience between them and had all held senior posts in schools, as headteachers or in local authorities, before joining Ofsted as HMI. Two were male and two female. Margaret and John had mainly primary education experience as headteachers, whilst Susan and Robert were former secondary headteachers. The HMI who were appointed in 1984 and 1989 left at the retirement age of 60, although both are still active in education locally and nationally and have knowledge of the new inspection systems as well as of early developments within and prior to Ofsted.

Susan and Robert had direct experience of developing Ofsted inspection criteria. The other two were indirectly involved through, in the case of Margaret, preparing training materials based on the criteria and working closely with the writing team. The fourth interviewee, John, participated in setting up the inspection framework and joined teams that visited other countries that were establishing systems of school inspection. For example, there were visits to Australia and Holland, to explore their planned inspection frameworks and criteria, and to see if 'they [Ofsted] were along the right lines'. The conclusion that this interviewee came to was that the suggested Ofsted approach was similar to that of other countries. They did not explore the criteria used in any great detail. Margaret described a trip by HMI to Japan to look at their classroom practice, but again this did not result in changing the inspection criteria, although it did inform HMIs' view of practice in Japan. John explained that Ofsted is an active member of the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates, which includes 28 countries (van Bruggen, 2010).

In Bourdieuan terms, these personnel brought significant cultural capital to the field of inspection and this enabled them to occupy positions of authority and power within the field. English and Bolton (2015: 57) describe cultural capital in relation to schooling as 'a non-economic, largely intangible and difficult measure form of capital that is represented in manners, taste, bodily deportment, dispositions, dress, consumption patterns and forms of knowledge that are approved- or not approved- by the school and its agents'. Not all of these attributes are applicable to my description of these HMIs' cultural capital, but their knowledge, experience and confidence (disposition) are relevant. Once part of the Inspectorate as HMI, their cultural capital in the eyes of the educational world and schools increased, because they then acquired status through the title HMI.

I have direct experience of being 'shielded' as an HMI from the need to establish my credibility, because the title 'HMI' did this for me. Once I left Ofsted and was no longer an HMI, I felt that I lost this 'badge of office and protection' and had to prove myself, based on my own merits. However, as a former HMI I retained some symbolic capital in the eyes of schools, but less than before. The Policy Exchange report *Watching the Watchmen* (Waldegrave and Simons, 2104:37), which is very critical of Ofsted, supported this view about HMI and said 'When it comes to Ofsted's own training, it is certainly true that the majority of teachers and headteachers spoken to for this research held HMIs in much higher esteem than Als'. The Select Committee (HOC, 2011) concluded, however, that the perceived difference between HMI and additional inspectors was not justified.

4.2 Views of influences on the criteria

Two of the HMI interviewed, Margaret and John, were in post around the time of the preparation of the first set of Ofsted criteria for inspecting schools and evaluating the quality of teaching (Ofsted, 1993). Although not directly involved in writing the criteria, they held positions of responsibility and influence and contributed to discussions that informed the final criteria. In one case, interviewee Margaret was responsible for writing training programmes for trainee primary

school inspectors. She explained how little time they had to do this and that they were writing the training guidance and materials at the same time as the criteria were being written:

In one room sat a team of HMI who were writing the inspection criteria. In an adjacent room were my colleague and I writing the materials to be used on the five-day training courses. As soon as the criteria were written, they were given to us. There happened to be a large mirror on the wall in our room, so we marked it up into five sections to represent the five days of the course and jammed it with post-its describing the training activities to be used. Often, we would go into the other HMI to discuss how the criteria seemed to be fitting in with what we wanted and did they reflect best practice that was determined by our own inspection experience. It was literally like that. [Margaret]

This process described above was carried out in haste with little time for reflection or consultation. There were literally two HMI writing the criteria and sharing this with the two HMI who were planning the training programme for inspectors.

Thomas (1998) describes the haste with which the Education Schools Act 1992 (DES, 1992) was rushed through parliament. This is reflected in the short time that Ofsted had to establish the new system and train inspectors for the first inspections of secondary schools in 1993 and of primary and special schools in 1994. There was probably little time to explore alternative criteria and, as the interviewees said, they relied on their own knowledge and experience to devise the criteria.

All interviewees spoke about the importance of HMIs' wealth of experience and inspection practice and how these were drawn upon when writing the criteria:

HMI were experienced inspectors who had been inspecting schools... for the past 150 years. [John]

Taking account of the views of HMI, who I have to say have a wealth and a breadth of experience in terms of teaching in schools. [Robert]

All these criteria that you found in the original handbook for inspection are all based on our [HMI] evidence and our knowledge and information that come from this. [Margaret]

In summary, the good practice that we've seen that's permeated right through all the developments of the framework and the criteria, are based on the good practice that we saw as HMI back in the '70s and '80s and so on and drew that out. That is what informed those starting points, that group who came together. [Margaret]

The views expressed by these interviewees support Fish's (1980) interpretation of HMI as an 'interpretative community' who relied very much on sharing ideas for good practice and drawing on their own experience and knowledge. Dunford (1998) describes how, prior to Ofsted, HMI would meet during the year in subject and phase groups to share practice and establish a shared understanding of good quality teaching and learning. At that time there was no written guidance on how to judge the quality of teaching. My own experience of joining HMI in 1991 confirms this. We were expected to draw on our own professional judgement, though had many opportunities to work with and learn from a wide range of other HMI colleagues during and after the induction year. However, there was rarely any written guidance or criteria, as one interviewee said:

It was almost an unwritten rule that you're HMI and that provides the criteria. You must know what a good lesson looks like because you're an HMI. [John]

This quote illustrates the importance of HMIs' position in the inspection field and their collective habitus by virtue of being responsible for writing the 'rules of the game', that is the inspection criteria by which teaching is evaluated. Humphreys (1994) used a similar game metaphor when discussing how schools in the early days of Ofsted struggled to use Ofsted criteria in their own observations of lessons in their schools. The system has moved on in the over 20 years since the start of Ofsted and schools are more sophisticated in their use of Ofsted criteria and in

preparing for an inspection; 'playing the game' is how a few of my headteacher and teacher interviewees referred to their preparation for an Ofsted inspection (see Chapter 5).

The HMI way of working through regular opportunities to meet and discuss practice was relatively successful as judgements could be challenged if necessary.

However, schools wanted to know what the basis for HMI judgements were (on all aspects inspected), so even then the system was far from perfect (Abbott, 1990).

The approach to preparing criteria in more recent years was described as more systematic and consultative by interviewees: it starts initially from the legal basis for inspections and what must be reported on as defined in the various Education Acts. Relevant groups, such as professional associations, head teacher groups, and the Teacher Development Agency, are consulted. After identifying the criteria, the next step is to identify the evidence that inspectors would need to gather in order to evaluate a school's practice. HMI then pilot the criteria on inspections before finalising the guidance and descriptors for the four inspection grades (outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate).

The interviewees had not been directly involved in the changes to the inspection teaching criteria between 1993 and 2012 and so my questions focused on the changes that they were more familiar with. In reality, the criteria changed very little in that time. The interviewees considered that probably the biggest difference was the sharper and increasing focus on judging teaching in terms of outcomes for pupils (such as their attainment, progress and response to teaching). They also referred to the more recent emphasis on looking at how different groups (for example, those from minority ethnic groups and those eligible for free school meals) were taught. Their recollections mirror the reality of how the criteria changed.

The inspection frameworks from September 2012 onwards (for example, Ofsted, 2012b:32) referred to the need for inspectors to 'consider the extent to which the Teachers' Standards are being met'. The *Teachers' Standards* (DfE, 2011a) were

introduced at the same time as the Ofsted September 2012 framework and the interviewees explained that these standards were being referred to as the Ofsted framework and criteria were prepared. This was the first time that Ofsted has given an explicit explanation for the basis of the teaching criteria. As the comparison in appendix 11 shows, there is a great deal of similarity between the Standards and Ofsted criteria, although the latter refer to teaching across the school rather than to an individual teacher.

4.3 Impact of research

The interviewees said that they had looked at educational research to inform the criteria, particularly recently:

Over the last four or five years we've probably paid a little more attention to that [research]. [Robert]

The focus was very clear that it was on learning and progress, and we were looking at the [Teachers'] Standards, what makes good teaching and we were looking at the research. [Susan]

They all referred to drawing on Ofsted's own evidence, or, prior to Ofsted, HMI documents such as the Curriculum Matters series, known as the 'raspberry ripple' curriculum documents¹⁷ (DES, 1984-89). This inspection evidence was referred to as research by the interviewees:

The other research that we ... used quite a lot was Ofsted's own research and that's one of the powerful things about Ofsted is all the subjects and survey reports, for example, the triennial reports were drawn on. [Susan]

What we do is to take account of that [research] and we look at two strands there: one is our own research and we have had a programme in the past, that does vary, of what we call survey inspections, quite often in specific subjects, and that gets us to, provides us with, information about the

¹⁷ So called because of the colour of the cover of the curriculum documents.

quality of teaching in different subjects about what works and what doesn't work. [Robert]

They also explored what other countries were using as criteria:

[We did a] lot of work... with the Dutch, who were also developing robust criteria for the inspection of classroom teaching and that was proving very useful. [John]

Other documents and research that were referred to by interviewees as influential on the criteria were: The '*Three Wise Men*'¹⁸ report (Alexander et al, 1992); the *McKinsey report* (Mourshed et al, 2010); Matthews and Sammons (2004); and Matthews and Smith (1995). Interviewees who referred to the *Three Wise Men* report did not explain how it impacted directly on the teaching criteria.

One interviewee (John) explained that Ofsted established a department called the Research, Analysis and International Division in 1992. This unit was responsible for, among other things, gathering all the inspection data and statistics, preparing the annual report and international work. This interviewee recalled the time when the former Chief Inspector, Chris Woodhead, commissioned a report into the impact of educational research (Tooley and Darby, 1998). The report was very critical about research, and John said:

It drove the coach and horses through the notion of the impact of education research on classroom practice and that took a long time for that. ...it raised challenges for HMI, who saw themselves sometimes as frontline researchers and there'll be lots of debates, which you will remember were about the difference between inspection and research.

This comment is linked to the debate as to whether inspection is the same as research and reflects criticisms about inspection, such as Fitzgibbon (1998). Smith

¹⁸ The report was given this popular title because of its three authors Robin Alexander, Jim Rose and Chris Woodhead.

(2000) argues that inspection and research are fundamentally different activities. Hegarty (1998) draws an unflattering comparison between the use of the Ofsted database by Chris Woodhead, HMCI at the time, who was very critical about the value of educational research. It is interesting that the interviewees all considered that inspection evidence, although based on the findings of a large number of different inspectors, is comparable to research. I was surprised at how little colleagues discussed educational research when I was an HMI (1991 to 2000). Another change identified by the interviewees is the greater use of consulting other organisations about the Ofsted frameworks and criteria, which contrasts with the way the first criteria were written.

4.4 Political influence

When asked about any possible political influence on the criteria, interviewees suggested that there was less influence on the criteria and more on the inspection framework itself, which is to do with the frequency of inspections, what is inspected and reported, and the duration of inspections. Interviewees said:

I think that probably of the four judgements the one that changed the least following any impact is that one. That's where the least political interference comes from and I think that that's because it is really about something that's outside their field, their understanding, whereas some of the things that did change or were tweaked because of, I should be careful how I say it, not necessarily because of political pressure, but for political consideration were, for example, in the achievement section. [Susan]

I think the methodology of how we inspect is pretty much left to Ofsted. I think there probably is broad agreement that Ofsted shouldn't have a preferred model. [Robert]

...particularly at the time... the National Curriculum was the driver for that rather than ministerial impact on teaching criteria, but we were inspecting

the teaching of subjects in primary schools rather than topic work as the vehicle for what was going on in primary classrooms. [John]

One of the big drivers was John Major's Parents' Charter and that always seemed to me to be very rarely commented on... PISA results were beginning to filter through and our international competitors were doing better in these things like languages, maths and science. This was another of the influences on this too. [John]

John's reference to the National Curriculum represents an early framework (Ofsted, 1993) where inspectors had to make judgements about how the National Curriculum was being delivered. Guidance at that time included details about what to look for in terms of the quality of teaching for each subject. This is, in my view, an example of political influence on the teaching criteria. John also referred to the importance of Major's Parents' Charter which had a clear influence on the way that Ofsted inspections were established with reports on each school for parents. This influence has been retained in terms of inspection reports having to be written in a way that will be understood by parents.

Interviewees' views that there has been relatively little political influence on the teaching criteria reflect my analysis of the criteria particularly up to 2012 when there were relatively few changes to the inspection criteria for teaching. There were many changes to the inspection framework, with the most significant occurring in 2005 due to the Education Act 2005 (DfES, 2005) (see page 58).

The interviewees commented that politicians spoke about international comparisons through the Programme for International Assessment (PISA) results¹⁹, in which pupils in England fared less well than those in other countries. They suggested that PISA was considered important by politicians but not that it had a direct impact on how teaching criteria were written. I had expected

¹⁹ 'Since the year 2000, every three years, fifteen-year-old students from randomly selected schools worldwide take tests in the key subjects: reading, mathematics and science, with a focus on one subject in each year of assessment'. Downloaded on 12 April 2014 from the OECD website: <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/aboutpisa>.

interviewees to make more of the impact of initiatives such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, but this was not the case. They were aware that there had been political influence on aspects of inspection and even on the criteria, for example, achievement and homework were mentioned (although homework has been included in teaching criteria since 1993). The view that politicians have less idea or confidence about making comments on the teaching criteria and hence left it to the 'experts' may be accurate.

However, one interviewee describing the early days of Ofsted said that ...

The challenge at the time was that the issue of teaching was very much one of the professionals against the rest really. It was a time of personalised learning, of topic work, of free play and words like whole class teaching were politicised....It was a political move if you taught the whole class, if you gave the class the information, if you told them things rather than asked them questions, or guided them and the Inspectorate was in a difficult position because there was a sense that it was part of the problem and it was this sort of liberal forward thinkingbased [on] a child development model. You wait for the child to be ready to learn their tables or whatever it was. So it was a very finely judged matter, but the criteria, the inspection framework, was in a sense to be based on what a good school looked like. It was almost the first time that a description was put out of what the features of a good school might be. [John]

This view expressed above illustrates the struggle at the time and the anti-HMI view as expressed by the Secretary of State Kenneth Baker (Baker, 1993: 168): 'if civil servants were the guardians of this culture [of 'progressive orthodoxies'] then Her Majesty's Inspectorate were its priesthood'. This comment illustrates the tensions that led up to the Education Schools Act 1992 (DES, 1992) which established Ofsted. It may also be a premonition of the current thinking over 20 years later that Ofsted must be seen to avoid having a preferred teaching model, which resulted in the Ofsted inspection handbook saying that 'Ofsted does not

favour any particular teaching style and inspectors must not give the impression that it does' (Ofsted, 2015a: 57).

The interviewees suggested that Secretaries of State for Education have asked Ofsted over the years to undertake particular surveys when there have been some concerns over the teaching of certain subjects:

Now the national strategies were easily led by politicians who might say we need a push to improve PE in schools and Ofsted was then sent in to review PE teaching in secondary schools or the teaching in music or the teaching in languages to boys. It was often, rather than the blanket school inspection system, was often those more specific inspections or surveys that I think were to do with the flavour of the moment, to do with what ministers were interested in... [John]

The comment above illustrates how politicians direct the work of Ofsted at times by asking for inspections of subject areas that have been identified as causing concern for whatever reason. This represents in Bourdieuan terms the importance of the political influence on the field of inspection (see figures 3.1 and 3.2) and its dominant place in the hierarchy. A more recent example of the government initiating Ofsted inspections relates to the 'Trojan Horse' affair in Birmingham, when Ofsted was asked to re-inspect schools because of concerns about radicalisation (Clarke, 2014; HOC, 2015a; 2015b; Roberts, 2015). Bartoszewicz (2014:106) indicated that in response to the Trojan Horse affair, Prime Minister David Cameron 'announced proposals to send Ofsted to any school without warning, saying that the schools in question had been able to stage a "cover-up" previously'. This whole episode called into question the reliability and validity of Ofsted inspection judgements and the introduction of some no-notice inspections (Clarke, 2014 and Ofsted, 2014l).

4.5 Influence of HMCI

It was not raised as a specific question, but two interviewees mentioned the impact of HMCI on the criteria. The influence of the second HMCI, Chris Woodhead, who succeeded Sir Stewart Sutherland, was noted by one interviewee in relation to the teaching of reading, which was a political issue at the time and led to the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy in 1998. Interviewee John said:

And in the things he was clearly wanting to have ... was to do with the teaching of reading, and that's why other systems needed to be brought in almost to bypass the inspection criteria, such as the establishment of the literacy project.

The comment above supports the view expressed by former HMCI Chris Woodhead (2002: 103) who stated that the literacy and numeracy strategies were 'the most important examples of the contribution inspection has made at the national level'. He describes how inspection evidence that resulted in the report on reading in 45 inner London primary schools (Ofsted, 1996b) 'persuaded Gillian Shephard [Secretary of State for Education at that time] to introduce the strategies'.

Interviewees spoke about more recent chief inspectors and how they had their own clear ideas about the criteria:

He had very fixed ideas and he talked about his fixed ideas and what he was going to do before he even started. [Susan]

I think, just a general point, one of the things that the current Chief Inspector has placed great emphasis on is about teaching and the quality of teaching and teaching being the heart of what schools do and that's emphasised in the way that some of the changes in the last couple of years, under Sir Michael, so that, for example, to be outstanding now, to be

outstanding overall, the quality of teaching has to be outstanding and I think that's right and hasn't always been the case. [Robert]

So the interviewees acknowledged and did not seem to have a problem with the fact that the chief inspector has a view about what should be inspected and how teaching should be judged. As Robert explained: 'because in the end everything we do is in the Chief Inspector's name and in the power invested in the Chief Inspector'.

It is interesting that interviewees did not comment on the influence of other HMCI who held that position between Woodhead and Wilshaw. One interviewee, John, in a follow up email after I sent the draft chapter, suggested that the other chief inspectors were likely to have been 'preoccupied with, on the one hand, the acquisition of more and more inspection responsibilities for Ofsted, and on the other hand the seemingly incessant structural reorganisations within Ofsted'. The Select Committee report in 2011 (HOC, 2011) considered that Ofsted's remit had grown too broad; it now includes responsibility for inspection of maintained schools, some independent schools, childminders, children's services and social care, children's centres, adoption and fostering agencies, the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS), further education, initial teacher training, adult skills, and prison learning. John may have a very valid point, but it could be that other chief inspectors were less high profile political appointments than Woodhead and Wilshaw.

The importance of the chief inspector and his/her power reflects the idea of a hierarchy within the field of inspection, with the chief inspector at the top as the most influential agent, with the ability to enact the most symbolic power. This acknowledgement of HMCI's power by HMI may arguably reflect their institutional habitus (Reay, 1998), with an unconscious acceptance of the authority and power of HMCI and lack of personal agency to question it.

4.6 The grading scale for criteria

I did not ask interviewees much about how and why the grading scale changed over the years, particularly from 2005 when the seven grades in place since 1996, were changed to four (see Table 2.1). In September 2014, a new framework was introduced (Ofsted, 2014a), which changed the term 'satisfactory' into 'requires improvement'. This change has been attributed to the HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw who, when he joined Ofsted stated that 'satisfactory is not good enough' (Ofsted, 2012c). The change was included as part of a public consultation document on the September 2012 Ofsted inspection framework. Sir Michael Wilshaw explained in the introduction to his first annual report:

Several of my predecessors have voiced the view that, when it comes to education and care 'satisfactory is not good enough'. It follows that satisfactory is a condition that 'requires improvement' within a defined period of time, and this change of descriptor was introduced in September 2012. No provider will now be allowed to trundle along year after year performing at a level that is less than good. We have raised the bar higher, but Ofsted will not walk away. We will continue to monitor, inspect, challenge and support these institutions until they improve. (Ofsted 2012e: 20)

The reference to 'not walking away', refers to the fact that schools judged to require improvement are monitored by HMI within a few months of the inspection and re-inspected within two years (Ofsted, 2015b).

What was equally important for schools and inspectors was the fact that from September 2014 the grade criteria no longer included a description for 'requires improvement' (often referred to as 'RI'), just stating that 'teaching requires improvement because it is not good' (Ofsted, 2014a: 62). One interviewee commented on this change:

It's easy to say when teaching is inadequate. Teaching is inadequate when it doesn't lead to learning all the time and that is really, really clear and it's relatively easy to say what good teaching over time is because of the impact, and it becomes harder to write something like 'requires improvement' because it either... becomes so negative that it looks like it's inadequate ... So the decision was that 'requires improvement'... it was just not good, but it wasn't so inadequate that the whole thing ... and I think that was the right. [Susan]

Susan explained the advantage of not describing what RI looks like because to do so made it then sound either like good or too much like inadequate. From my perspective as a lead inspector, the lack of description for RI makes it easier to distinguish between grades 2, 3 and 4 for the reasons described by Susan. Headteachers and teachers had a lot to say about the change to 'RI', and their responses are considered in the next two chapters.

4.7 Preferred model of teaching

Interviewees remarked on the recent development (in 2014), at the behest of HMCI, that that inspection reports should not suggest that Ofsted has a preferred model of what is good teaching (Wilshaw, 2014a). As Robert said:

The Department for Education also has a view, about whether or not Ofsted has a preferred model of teaching. Now in a sense it's always been our [HMI] view that we haven't had a preferred model of teaching, although that doesn't always necessarily match with what research might tell us, in a sense, so it's a kind of a curious position where, for example, research might tell us that some children might learn best whilst working independently, whereas if we were seen to be promoting independent learning as such, and this is part of the live debate, then that might be seen to be promoting independent learning over and above another form of

organisation of teaching or another form of learning. So we're quite careful not to do that.

Margaret commented on a problem with providing grade descriptions:

The major problem is when we went into providing those grades. Then teachers thought if I can do a lesson that's got those bits in it that will give me a very good grade.

Margaret's comment illustrates a common misunderstanding amongst teachers about the Ofsted criteria. First of all, the teaching criteria do not refer to individual lessons, as explained in a clear statement in the footnote to the descriptors, for example:

These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the school as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons. (Ofsted, 2013h: 39)

Secondly, the bullet points in the descriptors, for example, for grade 2 ('good'), are not expected to be used as a checklist:

These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team (Ofsted 2014a: 61).

However, from my own work, it is clear that many teachers and headteachers are not clear about this. This reflects, in my view, a disparity between those who have devised the 'rules of the game', who have the symbolic power, and those with little cultural capital, who have to apply the rules.

Ofsted has in recent years attempted to dispel these misconceptions by publishing a set of 'common myths' about the quality of teaching; that is what teachers believe

to be the case particularly when they are being observed, and are not true (Ofsted, 2014d and more recently Ofsted, 2015c). Part of the reason for teachers' misunderstanding could be that until 2009, inspectors awarded a grade for each lesson and shared that grade with teachers when they gave them feedback. It is also evident from the interviews with teachers and headteachers that some inspectors were, erroneously, still giving grades for each lesson well after 2009. Headteachers also grade lessons for their own monitoring purposes (see Chapter 5). There have been so many changes in the framework and guidance in the past three years that perhaps it is not surprising that teachers are confused and trying to do what they have heard is expected by inspectors. Performativity, that is teachers acting out what they perceive to be the Ofsted expectation of good teaching, is very much in evidence and is discussed later in this chapter.

The importance of the individual lesson grade is reflected in the fact that until 2009, inspectors awarded an overall grade for the quality of a lesson after each lesson was observed. The Ofsted guidance included descriptions of what each grade would look like for teaching. It was clear that the overall grade awarded for teaching in the school was linked to what inspectors had observed in lessons, as part of the grade descriptor for inadequate teaching confirms (Ofsted, 2009a: 32):

'Too many lessons [my underlining] are barely satisfactory or are inadequate and teaching fails to promote the pupils' learning, progress or enjoyment'.

At that time, inspectors would add up the number of lessons graded 1, 2, 3 and 4 and use this to support their final judgement on teaching in the school. The criteria for grading individual lessons disappeared after 2009, and the evidence form (EF) used by inspectors to record all evidence no longer included a box for an overall lesson grade (see appendices 8 and 9), although inspectors were expected to grade teaching, achievement and behaviour, if they had enough evidence in lessons. The 2012 inspection handbook (Ofsted, 2012b: 32) made it clear that

teaching should be judged over time, by which it meant, judged as what is typical rather than just in that lesson.

Since I interviewed the former HMI and teachers, Ofsted introduced another inspection framework for September 2014 (Ofsted, 2014a) in which inspectors are clearly told not to grade teaching in lessons. Inspectors had to attend compulsory training where this point was emphasised. Ofsted has published further guidance for schools explaining the changes and also outlining what they can expect from an inspection (to dispel other myths about what should be provided) (Ofsted, 2015c). The absence of grades for teaching in lessons is a big change for many inspectors and schools. Headteachers and teachers were aware of the possibility of this happening during my interviews, which took place between January and June 2014, and I asked for their views. See chapters 5 and 6 for their responses.

4.8 Performativity

The interviewees were asked how they think the teaching criteria influence what happens in school classrooms. The interviewees were aware that headteachers make use of Ofsted criteria when monitoring teaching in their schools and for performance management purposes:

Lots of schools will use the Ofsted criteria for monitoring the quality of teaching in their own school. My concern is that the grade descriptors are literally at times cut up and kind of re-badged and then used as criteria for judging lessons, or for judging the quality of teaching in lessons, which was not their intended purpose. Now I understand why people might want to do that, but that's not what Ofsted set out to do with them. [Robert]

The view of the interviewee quoted above reflects a concern that schools are misinterpreting the Ofsted criteria and that this is not helpful. The interviewee went on to criticise the use by schools of 'mocksteds', that is mock-Ofsted inspections where schools hire trained Ofsted inspectors to carry out a review of the school's

practice using the Ofsted framework. HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw also criticised mock inspections in a speech to the ASCL (Wilshaw, 2014a) and more recently, even suggesting that they should be banned (Vaughan, 2015b). This use of mock inspections is a very common practice in my experience and is reflected in the responses from headteachers I interviewed. Headteachers want to ensure that their schools are well prepared for an inspection, so that they get the best outcome possible. Interviewee Robert said that Ofsted wants to reduce the 'burden of inspection' and that includes the burden that schools place on themselves by preparing for inspection and having mock inspections. However, there is possibly an element here of what Bourdieu referred to as 'misrecognition' (Swartz, 1997: 43), as those with the symbolic power in Ofsted may not be able to view the impact of inspections from the perspective of the recipients (i.e. headteachers and teachers), even though they have all been teachers and headteachers themselves in the past.

Interviewee Susan said:

There's a feeling in schools that when they are observed in some way they are observed in a punitive and a measured way as opposed to a developmental and open way.....I do wonder whether part of it comes from when heads were expected to use the Ofsted framework to validate the school's self-evaluation and heads need to provide evidence to show that the teachings are of this quality. To provide evidence they need to show grades, they needed to show they were judging by Ofsted standards so therefore had the Ofsted tick list.

Again this comment above illustrates a misunderstanding by schools of what Ofsted expects and a misrecognition by Ofsted of the importance to schools of getting a good inspection outcome; headteachers and teachers try to do what they think is expected. The interviewees recognised that the inspection requirements had changed over the years and that schools may not always have been fully

aware of the changes. Susan also commented on the difficulty with changing the perception of schools about Ofsted inspections:

I think Ofsted has contributed to that [performativity] and I'm hopeful that Ofsted is now contributing to the dismantling of it, but I'm not sure that M W has quite taken on, you know when you build an edifice, and its huge, 23,000 schools, you can't quite knock it down with one little hammer, or one person saying it. It takes a great big ball and chain.

The field of Ofsted inspection has been around for over twenty years. The inspections frameworks have changed many times since the first one in 1993, and the way that inspectors judge the quality of teaching criteria have also changed significantly in recent years. But the communication does not seem to have filtered clearly to those lower down in the inspection field hierarchy, with the least cultural capital, that is teachers. Interviewees commented that teachers are the most concerned about the inspection judgement on their teaching:

Yes, those teachers that were graded as outstanding remember that as the highlight of their teaching career of course, I think. [John]

On the other hand, some teachers are not interested in what you have to say, 'tell me the grade', right, and I'm not sure how helpful that is. It's a bit like children when you mark their books, they are not interested in the comments, they just want the number. [Robert]

I think it's not so much talking to heads, it's talking to teachers that are more wound up, you know about their lessons observations. [Susan]

It's not about judging the teacher and I think we hoped at the time that if nothing else, it also changed the way that schools did performance monitoring because it hasn't and I'm quite shocked and quite saddened that two years on when I'm working with heads, so many of them are still doing the two management performance observations that they can do a year and then averaging people and then adding them up. [Susan]

The comments above reflect the view that teachers are very concerned about being observed during an inspection and these issues are considered in the next chapters where I analyse headteachers and teachers' responses to my interviews. It came across that those within Ofsted (that is, closer to the centre of power in the field) are not fully aware of the impact of inspections on recipients, particularly teachers. This reflects Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic power and of 'misrecognition'. Swartz (1997: 43) describes misrecognition as 'a key concept for Bourdieu, akin to the idea of "false consciousness" in the Marxist tradition, misrecognition denotes "denial" of the economic and political interests present in a set of practices'. It would not be fair to say that the interviewees were 'in denial' about the perceptions of teachers and headteachers and they had been in their position themselves in previous roles. Once in a position of authority, perhaps it becomes more difficult to fully appreciate the perspective and feelings of those with far less symbolic capital; they cannot fully appreciate the impact of being inspected and the implications for the reputation of schools, as expressed by the following interviewee's comment:

Our [Ofsted] view is, if teaching is going well and children are being taught properly, then there's nothing to fear from Ofsted really, or an Ofsted inspection. [Robert]

Reflecting on my own position and experience, I am sure that when I was an HMI I attempted to empathise with teachers, but probably was as subject to 'misrecognition' as my interviewees. I attempted to put teachers and headteachers at their ease, but possibly did not appreciate quite how high their level of stress was. I believed in 'improvement through inspection'. I was taught to 'do good as you go' by a senior HMI colleague during my induction year and always tried to apply this mantra during inspections.

The desire to be fair to schools came across from all of the former/ current HMI I interviewed. Since the first framework for inspections, there has been a Code of

Conduct for inspectors. For example, the 2005 Inspection Framework (Ofsted, 2005a: 22) states: 'Inspectors must uphold the highest professional standards in their work, and ensure that school staff are treated fairly and benefit from their inspection'. I think that since leaving Ofsted and working more closely with schools, I can see inspection more from their perspective, that is, further from the source of power and how stressful it is for them and how important the outcome actually is.

4.9 Differences between the response of primary and secondary teachers and headteachers

The interviewees mainly concluded that there was not a great deal of difference between the way that primary and secondary headteachers and teachers respond to being inspected. One interviewee, Susan, suggested that 'secondary heads are probably more savvy and more on the ball when it comes to Ofsted and it might be just a local issue, more inconsistency in primary'. Others commented that the size of secondary schools and their organisation into subject departments may be the greatest difference, with sometimes significant variation between departments, which is not typically the case with primary schools (although some are very large nowadays).

There was an observation by Robert that the smaller size of most primary schools might give them 'more opportunity for the school collectively as a smaller body of people, if you like, to engage with those [criteria] and discuss those if that's what they choose to do'. However, the interviewee concluded that 'the process is the same in a primary school as in a secondary school, in terms of what you observe, what you write down on your evidence form. There's no difference between the two'.

I was surprised by the interviewees' comments that there is little difference between the response of primary and secondary teachers to being inspected. My own experience suggests that there is a difference, partly because primary teachers are observed more often during an inspection as there are usually fewer

of them and most will teach subjects such as English and mathematics that are focused on during inspection. The 1999 Select Committee report (HOC, 1999) noted that primary school teachers are observed over twice as often as secondary teachers. Jeffrey (2002) also suggests that primary teachers have been particularly affected by what is referred to as the 'performativity discourse'. I considered that this would mean that they are more concerned about being observed than secondary teachers, not all of whom (particularly if they teach non-core subjects) will be observed during an inspection.

4.10 Consistency and training for inspectors

The interviewees were asked about their views on the consistency in the way inspections are conducted and in their judgements. Consistency (or lack of) has been the subject of much criticism about Ofsted by schools and unions (for example, ATL, 2012; Barber, 2004; Forrest and Cooper, 2014; HOC, 2011; Waldegrave and Simons, 2014). Recently former HMI Sir Mike Tomlinson reported his concerns about consistency of inspection judgements and an over-reliance by inspectors on data (Stewart, 2015). This comment reflects a recent admission by a current senior HMI, who is the National Director for school policy within Ofsted, in a blog response, (Harford, 2014) that Ofsted has concerns about the reliability of judgements and over-reliance by some inspectors and some schools on performance data. He indicates that Ofsted will try to resolve this issue when inspections are brought back in-house from September 2015. Harford (2015) also indicated in a speech in 2015: 'I have absolutely no doubt that it will help improve the quality of inspection and, just as importantly, instil greater confidence and credibility in the process'. This illustrates the belief that improvements in consistency will be achieved when Ofsted manages the deployment of inspection team. Sir Michael Wilshaw said in a speech in March 2014 (Wilshaw, 2014a) that 'Ofsted needs to undertake a root and branch review of outsourced inspection. Inspection, as far as I'm concerned, is just too important for Ofsted to simply have oversight of third party arrangements'.

Interviewees spoke about the difference between training for HMI which involved a year's induction in the early days. They acknowledged the difficulty of ensuring consistency with such a large number of additional inspectors (those who inspect on behalf of Ofsted but are not HMI). In early 2015 there were close to 3000 additional inspectors. This figure is based on an Ofsted newsletter (Ofsted, 2015f) that stated that over 2800 inspectors expressed interest in contracting with Ofsted from September 2015 when Ofsted takes over the management of inspections. The newsletter went on to say that 2300 inspectors completed an on-line assessment and the 1600 that 'passed' this assessment had to undertake two days training/ assessment led by HMI.

The interviewees acknowledge that despite the training and the written criteria, there is still inconsistency when inspectors undertake inspections in schools, as Susan said:

Regardless of whether you train them or not... it's more about how they actually go out and do it. When you think about the sheer number of inspectors, I do think there's a quite a lot of inconsistency, a huge inconsistency in inspection teams.

One interviewee made an interesting observation, which is perhaps not given enough emphasis by Ofsted in guidance, that what is perceived as inconsistency may simply be because each school is different:

However, I do have to say that in terms of where there are charges of inconsistency levelled, I think we have to leaven that with the notion that ... inspectors are kind of tailoring a framework to the needs of a particular school and there are different focuses and different emphasis within different schools depending on their particular circumstances. [Robert]

The interviewees indicated that despite having criteria and guidance for inspectors it is very difficult to ensure consistency, as Susan said:

People have their own different views and some people find it very hard to get out of that viewpoint and it goes back to what I said, I think, earlier, having really tight grade descriptions, in theory should have eliminated inconsistency. It didn't.

Margaret recalled that in the early days of Ofsted, HMI would aim to assure consistency by monitoring the quality of inspections by visits to the schools being inspected. I was a member of the team that undertook these visits and our intention was to ensure quality during the inspection, rather than waiting to review the inspection report (although these were reviewed). HMI still quality assure a few inspections on-site, but on a much smaller scale than previously, probably because of the need to reduce the inspection budget.

Ofsted leaders hope that by bringing inspections in-house they will be able to assure consistency and quality more easily. The plan is also for additional inspectors (who will be called Ofsted inspectors from September 2015) to be closely mentored and monitored by HMI. Additional inspectors have had a great deal of continuing professional development in recent years, most of which has been compulsory (and paid for by inspectors). Just to give a few examples of compulsory training for inspectors in the last year: safeguarding training (one day face-to-face- January 2015) and on-line (Autumn 2014); 'academies and free schools' update online training (autumn 2014); SEN online training (autumn 2014); LGBT training (on-line 2014); inspecting mathematics (online spring 2015); mandatory section 5 training (August 2014); and section 5 e-learning update training (September 2014). The impact of all this training and constant changes on additional inspectors was not explored as part of this research.

In order to explore the issue of consistency further, I had a conversation in June 2015 with a current senior HMI who is leading an Ofsted team that is reviewing the inspection framework. It was clear that Ofsted is concerned about consistency and this HMI described three ways in which it is being addressed. Firstly, by reducing

the number of additional inspectors and ensuring that they are of high quality. This has led to what some newspapers have described as 'culling' or 'purging', for example, Vaughan writing in the TES (Vaughan, 2015a). The number of additional inspectors has been reduced from around 2800 to 1600 as a result of some deciding not to continue and a series of on line and face to face assessments. The additional inspectors who 'passed' are to be called Ofsted inspectors (OIs). They will work closely with HMI and be supervised and trained centrally. In addition, the majority of the OIs are practising headteachers. The second approach to ensuring consistency is the complaints process, which will now include a regional panel, which is to include headteachers who are not inspectors and the panel's decision will be binding (Ofsted, 2015l). The third approach, which has most relevance for this research is that Ofsted is reviewing its methodology and testing consistency of inspectors' judgements during inspections. There have been six pilot inspections this term where two lead inspectors (HMI) were in the same school – coming independently to judgements to see if they agree. Ofsted has consulted education academics to establish how to ensure validity of the approach and plan to undertake 80 inspections next year to establish some statistical reliability of the findings. Despite what seems to me to be a sensible approach to check consistency, it has attracted negative media coverage (Garner, 2015a). The approach comprises one-day inspections for 'good' schools undertaken alongside a two-day Section 5 inspection and judgements compared at the end. The senior HMI who explained this indicated that they are aware that with 80 joint inspections there is likely to be a few where judgements differ. As HMI Sir Robin Bosher, who is Ofsted's director of quality and training, said in the TES interview (Vaughan, 2015a), 'we are dealing with human beings. We're not making telephones, we're delivering inspection. It's a human process'. This three-pronged approach indicates how strongly Ofsted takes the issue of consistency.

4.11 Summary

The former/ current HMI (Ofsted employees) each brought a great deal of cultural capital to their role as HMI as they were all headteachers prior to working as an

HMI. Once part of Ofsted (although two interviewees became HMI prior to Ofsted), they occupied positions of authority in what I have called the 'field of inspection'. All of the interviewees considered that the teaching criteria were initially based mainly on HMIs' own knowledge of good teaching practice. This supports the view of HMI as an interpretative community (Fish, 1980; Lee and Fitz, 1998; Dunford, 1998). They indicated that Ofsted did look at how other countries, such as Holland, were inspecting schools, though this did not necessarily impact on the criteria.

These former/ current HMI considered that politics had less influence on the teaching criteria than on other aspects of inspection, such as the frequency, size of teams, areas to be inspected and reported on. One interviewee also referred to the fact that inspectors were expected to look at how the National Curriculum was being implemented in the classroom. The National Curriculum was introduced in 1988 by the then Conservative government. Early Ofsted inspection guidance included advice on inspecting the teaching of different National Curriculum subjects. The guidance was very specific. For example, in relation to the teaching of art, the guidance in the 1993 Handbook says:

They [teachers] should ensure that pupils are able to work independently, in groups and as a whole class, and should give pupils explanations and demonstrations of techniques and processes appropriate to each stage of the learning process. (Ofsted, 1993: 40)

This explicit guidance on what inspectors should look for in the classroom is in sharp contrast to the more recent instructions from Ofsted that make it clear that 'inspectors must not give the impression that Ofsted favours a particular teaching style' (Ofsted, 2014a: 57). Interviewees commented on this development, which was not finalised at the time of the interviews. Interviewee Robert noted the 'curious position' of Ofsted in which although research might indicate that a particular teaching style is beneficial, inspectors should not be seen to be promoting this style over another. Susan made what I think is a very important and

relevant observation about the wording of the criteria, when referring to the statement about good teaching:

You didn't need anything other than that first line because that first line "teaching in most subjects is usually good with some outstanding ..as a result most pupils, or groups of etc etc, make good progress and achieve well over time" [reading from the criteria]. I don't think you would really need the rest personally.

Susan's comment chimes with the clear link that has emerged in the last year between the achievement and teaching grades. The interviewees referred to research that Ofsted had drawn on to review or revise the teaching criteria. They all alluded to Ofsted's own evidence base and reports as 'research'. One interviewee considered that Ofsted has recently made greater use of research from external sources than in the past. Interviewees involved in preparing the September 2012 Ofsted guidance (Ofsted, 2012b: 32) spoke about the link to the *Teachers' Standards*, which was the first time that Ofsted has published a rationale for its teaching criteria.

The importance of HMCI's views and input emerged from the interviews. The interviewees only referred to two HMCIs in their comments, but this was not one of my interview questions initially, so I would not want to draw conclusions from this. Chris Woodhead was mentioned. He was the second person to hold the post of HMCI, following Sir Stewart Sutherland, and was controversial in his time, with strong views on the teaching of reading. The current incumbent, Sir Michael Wilshaw, was referred to as having a clear idea about what he wanted and, for example, masterminding the introduction of 'requires improvement' as a replacement for satisfactory. Interviewees appeared to accept that HMCI's view should take precedence over other HMI, as one interviewee noted, because he is ultimately responsible for what goes on in Ofsted.

Interviewees were aware of the impact of inspections on performativity. They were concerned that headteachers are over-reliant on using Ofsted criteria as checklists for monitoring lessons. They all showed empathy towards the impact of inspections on schools, particularly on teachers, and a genuine wish to reduce the burden on schools. Those who had left Ofsted and are working alongside schools (as I am in my present role) appear (perhaps understandably) to have a more realistic appreciation of the stress schools experience when faced with an imminent Ofsted inspection. The view from within Ofsted may be described by what Bourdieu referred to as 'misrecognition', whereby those in authority with the most symbolic capital cannot appreciate the position of those with far less capital and power.

Interviewees did not think that there is a great deal of difference between the way that primary and secondary teachers respond to being inspected. In my view this again reflects misrecognition, as primary school teachers are much more likely than secondary teachers to be observed during an inspection, because their schools are usually smaller and most primary teachers will be teaching literacy and numeracy, which are priority areas to be observed by inspectors. However, this view may reflect my own bias and personal experience, although it was noted in the Select Committee report. (HOC,1999).

The interviewees were aware of concerns over consistency and how Ofsted was trying to overcome this, for example, through more training by HMI and by bringing inspections back under the management of Ofsted (rather than through the current three ISPs) and by comparing inspectors' judgements during inspections. An interesting view from one interviewee was that the inconsistency may be more of a feature of different schools than different interpretations of the criteria and framework. This view is not one that is publicly aired very often and would be interesting to explore further. Under the last few inspection frameworks, inspection reports have become very tightly specified and in my view have become more formulaic and less tailored to schools' different circumstances and contexts.

Chapter 5 Analysis of interviews with primary headteachers

5.1 Introduction

The themes that emerged from the interviews with the headteachers were: the professional experience of the headteachers or deputies that I interviewed; their views and recollections of their most recent inspection experience; how the criteria have changed over the years; their views on any influences on the criteria, including politics and research; influence of data on inspectors' judgements; how the criteria are used in their schools; performativity; impact on their professionalism and autonomy; pressure on teachers; views about the appropriateness of the criteria and of Ofsted; and the consistency of inspections.

In most cases, the interviewees also spoke about inspection issues that were not specifically about the teaching criteria. For example, they discussed their general thoughts about the inspection framework and different approaches taken by inspection teams. They also mentioned the new National Curriculum which was about to be introduced into schools in September 2014, a few months after the interview, so it was uppermost in their minds. Some of their general points are included in the analysis that follows.

The analysis considers the interviewees' responses in terms of a Bourdieuan view about the institutional habitus of the interviewees and their position in the 'field of inspection'; see Figure 3.2 in the previous chapter, which is a representation of my concept of field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) of inspection, in which headteachers occupy a fairly lowly position, as they have significant cultural capital as authority figures in their own schools, but are subject to inspections by additional inspectors or HMI who wield more capital.

5.2 Backgrounds of the interviewees and their schools

The primary headteachers I interviewed (or deputies in two cases) had between them a broad range of experience as heads and as teachers. The years in which

they started teaching ranged from 1976 to 2004. Eight interviewees started teaching between 1987 and 1995, which are significant years as the National Curriculum was introduced in 1988 and Ofsted in 1992. Their headship experience was also wide ranging, from under a year to 21 years. I interviewed two deputy headteachers who stood in for heads who were ill or called away at the last minute. I considered that the length of experience might have an impact on how they answered the questions. I cannot say that there were any major differences between their responses linked to length of experience. The most experienced heads were more outspoken in their views about Ofsted, but this may have been because they were more confident and less concerned about how they came across to me.

The other contextual factor that I felt might be significant was the date of the interviewee's most recent Ofsted inspection. I considered that having a recent inspection might influence the way they responded because the experience was so fresh in their memories. Five schools had been inspected after September 2012, that is post Sir Michael Wilshaw who introduced a new inspection handbook (Ofsted, 2012b) in which 'satisfactory' was replaced by 'requires improvement' and teaching had to be outstanding if the school was to be judged outstanding overall. These heads whose schools were inspected one or two years prior to the interview were able to recall the experience in some detail, as highlighted in the analysis below.

The outcome of the most recent inspection was also relevant as those whose school was judged to 'require improvement' shared views about the process that differed from some of the other heads, particularly those who had not been inspected for some time. These differences are discussed in the sections that follow. Two of the schools had been judged 'outstanding' at their most recent inspections, which were in 2008 in both cases. There were differences in the response of these two heads as in one case they were anticipating an inspection at any moment. The stress of waiting to be inspected was a recurring theme that is discussed below and reported in the literature (for example, Hall and Noyes, 2009;

Jeffrey and Woods, 1996; Poet et al, 2010; Perryman, 2012). In the other outstanding school, the head is also an Ofsted inspector, which provided her with an interesting insight into the inspection process. Their responses are included in the analyses that follow.

All but one of the schools is located in London, in either inner or outer London boroughs. As can be seen from Table 3.1, most of their schools include high proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and pupils eligible for free school meals and the pupil premium (DfE, 2010b). Despite the challenging contexts facing most of the schools, the headteachers made relatively few comments about how this might impact on their Ofsted outcome. One headteacher, whose school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) explained that this impacted on the end of key stage results:

Again I think it's mixed messages because you read part of the Ofsted framework and it seems very clear it's from a starting point. It's [the judgement on progress] from where they are. But still, when they're looking at your data, it's – that includes your SEN children. You know this is what the general public see of your data and that's how it was presented to me was that's what the general public see. [Ann- head of a school with high proportion of SEND pupils]

The point that Ann was making concerns the fact that Ofsted's judgement on achievement is based on progress from pupils' different starting points:

When judging achievement, inspectors must have regard for pupils' starting points in terms of their prior attainment and age. (Ofsted, 2015a: 63)

However, as Ann said, the 'public data', which is what the general public can see by looking at the school's Ofsted's Data Dashboard online, gives the results for all pupils and does not disaggregate those for pupils with special needs, however,

severe. In other words, if the results of the few SEN pupils are discounted, the Key Stage 2 results might be as good or better than the national average. The other important point from Ann's comment is the high profile given to performance data when inspectors make their judgements. This is discussed more in section 5.4. Only one head made any significant reference to how much harder it is to work in a challenging school and to do as well as schools serving more advantaged populations:

Our kids are as bright as other kids definitely, but there are other challenges that they have to face that we have to address because there is not a three - way process often with the children that get stuck. It's two ways, just child and school. We get told off, don't we, for saying that. It's not blame, it's just how it is. [Hugh]

The head, Hugh, is saying that he is aware that he should not be making excuses about the pupils at his school, but that they do not get the support at home that children from more advantaged homes receive (Thrupp, 1998). Although nearly all of the interviewees' schools served disadvantaged areas as measured by the deprivation indicator²⁰ included in the school's Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through school Self-Evaluation (RAISE) online report, they did not indicate that their contexts make it harder for their schools to be judged good or outstanding (as most of them had been). The data suggests that it is. Data I analysed from the Ofsted's Data View website (downloaded on 12 April 2015) showed that twice as many schools in affluent areas were judged outstanding compared with areas of high deprivation. The latter were twice as likely to be judged 'requires improvement'. Two per cent of schools in areas of high deprivation were judged inadequate, whereas there were none in areas of low deprivation. This suggests that it is harder to be judged good or outstanding in areas of high deprivation. The link between underachievement and disadvantage has been widely reported (see for example, Carter-Wall and Whitfield, 2012; Connolly et al,

²⁰ Ofsted uses the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), 2010, as a deprivation indicator; for example, 0.24 means that 24% of children 16 or under are living in families that are income deprived. (Turp, 2012)

2014; HOC, 2014a; Ofsted, 2011b; 2013b). It is not therefore surprising that it appears more difficult to attain a good Ofsted outcome in an area of high deprivation, given the weight that Ofsted inspections give to achievement²¹.

Bourdieu (1984:15) refers to the 'best hidden effect of the educational system, the one it produces by imposing 'titles', a particular case of the attribution of status, whether positive (ennobling) or negative (stigmatizing)...'. Although Bourdieu was referring to the educational system as a whole, Ofsted's regime of accountability uses labels and assigns titles that can be supportive (for example, when a school is judged as 'good' or 'outstanding') or devastating and stigmatizing when a school is declared as 'failing' and requiring 'special measures'.

Most of the interviewees had experienced several Ofsted inspections in their careers, and were able to talk about the different approaches to the inspection of teaching. They were also aware of the change to judging teaching over time and the possibility that lessons would not be given a teaching grade (which was introduced in September 2014, after the interviews which took place between January and June 2014).

5.3 Views on their most recent Ofsted inspection

The most recent inspections of the interviewees' schools took place in 2012 or 2013, before the rule that inspectors should not grade teaching when observing lessons. However, the suggestion that this might happen had been made public by HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw in a speech at the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) conference (Wilshaw, 2014a), when he spoke about the importance of inspectors not indicating that there is a preferred teaching approach. Interviewees were aware of these developments.

Even in 2012, inspectors were discouraged from relying on the percentage of 'good' etc teaching seen in lessons when arriving at an overall judgement on teaching. The guidance in the September 2012 Ofsted handbook (Ofsted, 2012b:

²¹ Achievement is measured by combination of attainment (results in tests compared to the national average) and progress from different starting points.

32) says: 'The judgement on the quality of teaching must take account of evidence of pupils' learning and progress over time. Inspectors must not simply aggregate the grades awarded following lesson observations'. The grade descriptor for teaching (Ofsted, 2012b: 34) could, though be misinterpreted by inspectors, as one criterion for good teaching said: 'Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is usually good, with examples of some outstanding teaching'; this gives the impression of the need to add up the grades given for lesson observations. The grade descriptors (Ofsted, 2012b: 34) include a footnote that says: 'These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the school as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons'. Despite this, two interviewees indicated that inspectors had relied heavily on percentages of good teaching etc:

The last Ofsted we had here in 2012 was very much based on the 80% teaching good to get the good grade and 50% outstanding to get the outstanding grade. However, having been on other courses it's now very much, it's nothing to do with that..., Because I think we were very, very stuck on the percentages when we had the Ofsted here and to the point where when it was fed back, it was fed back that they'd seen eighty percent of good teaching and therefore... [Mary]

They did grade lessons [in 2013]. [Carol]

From what the headteachers are saying, the inspectors were making their judgement on teaching by adding up the numbers of lessons graded good etc; this was not the approach prescribed in the Ofsted guidance. In other words, inspectors were not following the guidance, leading to inconsistency of approach; which is picked up later. My view as an additional inspector is that there have been so many changes it is very hard to keep abreast of them all.

Interviewees also commented on how in these early inspections it was still about the teaching performance. As one head said:

Cos' possibly when we had the last Ofsted [2008], you were very much able to pull out a one-off lesson. Some schools I'm sure have these Ofsted lessons ready, whereas you just can't. You can't do that now. [Pauline]

The interviewee's comment above refers to the change to the inspections that occurred after their last inspection. The interviewees were mainly positive about the latest inspection experience and how they as senior leaders were involved, for example, in joint observations and meetings:

There was definitely looking at [criteria], but it was back in the base room and unpicking it afterwards as a team. They were working as a team.
[Carole]

As stressful as Ofsteds are, it was a really positive team. I got a sense they that they knew ... and they just they wanted us to be a good school. [Helen]

He was absolutely brilliant, the guy [lead inspector] and he saw the data but he also honed in some stuff that nobody else had taken account of.
[Sarah]

I felt that was very fair. I couldn't argue. In some instances I felt they were quite generous....Sometimes the lead inspector did ask, 'do you agree' and bring me into the conversation? He would keep asking my opinion of things. I think he was trying to make sure that I was part of [the process].
[Liz]

And I think one of the other biggest differences I felt with Ofsted when they came in 2012 was I was involved in every single meeting and that was very different from before they would go off into a room and they'd have discussions that I wasn't a part of. [Helen]

The comments above suggest that in most cases, the heads or deputies considered that the inspection was fair and that the judgements were accurate.

They welcomed the opportunity to be involved in meetings and in joint lesson observations with inspectors. They may, of course have been giving me the answers that they thought I wanted to hear, but the consistency of their responses suggests that this is not the case. Their comments about the lead inspector indicate how significant that role is to the inspection and suggests that lead inspectors occupy a higher position in the 'inspection field' than other inspectors who were members of the inspection team. Lead inspectors have greater symbolic capital because their view is ultimately the most important, even though inspectors are supposed to work as a team. The lead inspector is the only one who writes the report and has to take responsibility for this and for the evidence base, which both come under a great deal of scrutiny from the ISPs and Ofsted.

Since January 2015, HMI (in Ofsted) have been reading every single inspection report to provide quality control, following a quality assurance (QA) process undertaken by the ISP. This practice seems to stem from Sir Michael Wilshaw's drive to ensure that reports do not suggest that Ofsted has a preferred teaching style (Wilshaw, 2014a). Lead inspectors have to respond to comments from the QA reader from the ISP and any further changes specified by HMI. They have to send in the evidence base which comprises evidence forms (EFs) on which every detail about the evidence gathered during the inspection is recorded (hand written) (Ofsted, 2015a; Tribal, 2013; Tribal, 2015b). For a two-person inspection (say of a medium sized primary school) there will typically be around 60 EFs that have to be checked by the lead inspector before sending to the ISP. This detail is given to illustrate the lead inspector's responsibility and draws from my own knowledge and experience of leading primary school inspections.

One of the interviewee's schools went from being outstanding when inspected in 2007 to 'requires improvement' in 2013²². The head did not disagree with the inspection outcome, but described how difficult this was before and afterwards:

²² Hugh's school was inspected again in 2015 and judged to be 'good'.

I think that one of the problems that we had is that when you are an outstanding school as it was in 2007 and not inspected for six years, it is a long time and I think that we were still looking at teaching rather than learning and I think that even if in some ways we still had our heads for teaching and even if the team were looking for learning, I still would have agreed with the majority of what they had said. [Hugh]

Schools that are judged to require improvement overall and where the leadership and management also 'require improvement', receive monitoring visits by HMI shortly after the inspection (Ofsted, 2015b). These visits are usually carried out by one HMI and include lesson observations, meetings with key members of staff and governors. The focus is to review 'how urgently and effectively it is acting on the key areas for improvement identified at the most recent section 5 inspection' (Ofsted, 2015b:5). The interviewee who had experienced such a visit (because the school had been judged to require improvement) was positive about it:

The HMI came in with what I thought was more of a supportive agenda and I am sure that they would have gleaned pretty quickly where the school was. I am sure that they were very aware of the progress that had been made since the inspection and whether the monitoring wouldn't have been so comfortable if things were being picked up that maybe still weren't quite right and things weren't being addressed. [Hugh]

This approach to being monitored by HMI was seen by Hugh as being supportive and developmental rather than punitive. Scanlon (1999: 81) also reported that headteachers in schools that were in special measures were positive about the HMI monitoring visits, saying they were 'more useful and constructive than the Ofsted inspection'. The HMI that undertook the visit was seen as a 'critical friend'. The comments by these headteachers might indicate the difference in approach between the Ofsted inspection and the HMI visit. They might also be a measure of the different value placed on the fact that it was an HMI rather than an additional inspector that carried out the visit. This relates back to comments earlier on how

schools perceive HMI as superior to additional inspectors; HMI are perceived as having more symbolic capital in the field of inspection (see figure 3.2).

5.4 Link between data and the quality of teaching

Although the questions that I asked interviewees were about the criteria for teaching, they all referred to the significance of performance data. They felt that the lead inspector had sometimes made a decision about the inspection outcome before arriving at the school; the decision based on looking at data in RAISEonline²³ and Data dashboard²⁴. Interviewees said:

[The inspection before the latest] was a bad experience and I have to say anecdotally from colleagues who've had more recent Ofsted experiences than us, that judgements have been made pretty much before anybody's entered the building and that's literally on the public data, the RAISEonline data, the last set of key test results. [Sarah]

It's almost as if lead inspectors have made their decisions before they have arrived. [Sarah]

I think they make up their mind from RAISEonline. That's how I feel, and they'll either try and prove you right or wrong depending on what they're looking for. [Helen]

I think most heads would feel that the process is much more about attainment and that if they haven't got good attainment in their schools it is more worrying than if teaching isn't inspirational and exciting and the children really love learning. [Liz]

²³ RAISEonline, launched in 2006, is produced by Ofsted and provides comparative data on early years, Key Stage 1 and 2 outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check, teacher assessments (Key Stage 1 reading, writing and mathematics and Key Stage 2 writing) and end of Key Stage 2 tests in reading and mathematics. It also includes progress data from the end of KS1 to 2 and information about the performance of difference groups, such as boys, girls, minority ethnic groups and those eligible for the pupil premium (referred to as disadvantaged).

²⁴ The Data Dashboard, launched in February 2013, is provided online by Ofsted and provides a summary of results data over a three-year period and comparisons to other schools nationally.

This last one we had they were looking at books. I still think there was an element of....the data says this for this year in terms of what are we seeing in the classrooms that supports what the data is showing us. [Ann]

But the data I felt was driving their judgement on teaching and I get it's linked, but I don't see how you can make a judgement on that one particular lesson and judge that actually without spending a lot time on books and I am not saying that would have backed it up I am just saying the judgement was made. [Hugh]

This point about inspectors relying on the data is very topical. It has been raised by senior HMI Sean Harford who, in a series of blogs (Harford, 2014), admitted that 'some inspectors and some schools focus too much on a narrow range of data'. Ozga (2009:155) describes how central government and, by implication Ofsted, retain control over schools through the management of data, with the inspection system being 'data-driven'.

All of the interviewees spoke about data and felt strongly that this was an overriding consideration in inspectors' judgement on teaching as well as on achievement. Interviewees said:

[it seemed as if] teaching was being graded in light of the data and I know that it says within the instructions that one follows the other. I just found that was the frustration. I am not trying to dispute my grade, I am trying to dispute that it doesn't necessarily follow that somebody's teaching is going to require improved if the data overall is not as it ought (to be). [Hugh]

But the Ofsted inspector said well they can't be outstanding because the data doesn't support that and so whatever you might think about the teaching the link to data is so tight and I think inspectors are hamstrung by that. They've got no choice because they told us -I can't write this or it will be sent back to me. The reader will send it back and say this doesn't marry up. [Sarah]

These comments suggest that the heads felt that judgements about teaching were influenced strongly by what the inspectors thought about the performance data. Although they said that in recent inspections, inspectors looked at pupils' current work in books, they considered that inspectors still relied heavily on historical data (from RAISEonline). The third comment above refers to the interviewee's understanding of the pressure that lead inspectors are under to avoid being criticised by the ISP QA readers, as well as the close link between data and the outcomes for the school. Guidance from ISPs emphasises the link between teaching and progress; for example, one of the inspection service providers, Tribal (2013) advised inspectors as follows:

It is important to look at the school's progress data for each year group in terms of the proportion of pupils making expected and more than expected progress. The judgement on the quality of teaching must take account of evidence of pupils' learning and progress over time. Inspectors must not simply aggregate the grades awarded following lesson observations. Direct observation must be supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable inspectors to evaluate what teaching is typically like and the impact it has had on pupils' learning over time.

There has been much public criticism of the over-reliance on data by inspectors. For example, Baxter and Clarke (2013: 705) looked at three different inspection systems and interviewed key actors, including headteachers and inspectors for their views. They report that many headteachers are 'suspicious as to the ways in which the data are used by Ofsted in order to make a judgement.' They report that an inspector quoted a headteacher who said 'If all you are going to look at is the stats then why bother coming into school?'. An earlier review by the NFER (McCrone et al, 2009: 6) also commented on concerns about the use of data, quoting a headteacher as saying that inspectors were 'more interested in the numbers than the children'.

The use of data by Ofsted inspectors has evolved during the years since Ofsted began in 1992, partly as a result of having increasing access to a wide data base of comparative school performance in the various national tests. Performance tables for primary schools started in 1996 (DfE, 2015a). In the first few years of inspection, inspectors were provided with a pre-inspection context and statistical indicator (PICSi) report, which provided some comparative and national data, but was criticised by schools as not always accurate (HOC, 1999). Ofsted attempted to improve the PICSi with the introduction of the performance and assessment (PANDA) report, which included comparative information that was included in a table in the summary of the inspection report. The PANDA was also not without its critics. For example, Richards (2001a: 25) said that the PANDA, 'are at best very partial, limited sources of evidence that need to be treated with great caution and need complementing by many other sources of information including professional judgement on a wide range of issues'. The current source of comparative data is found in each school's RAISEonline report that is accessed online (via a password); the contents and format have been modified a few times since its introduction in 2006. It is invaluable for inspectors who use it to build a picture of the school's performance in national tests and the achievement of different groups of pupils (particularly those eligible for the pupil premium). The biggest change since earlier databases is the inclusion of information about pupils' progress from the end of Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress data helps to inform judgements about pupils' achievement and teaching. The description for 'good teaching' (Ofsted, 2015a: 61) says:

Teaching over time in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is consistently good. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make good progress and achieve well over time.

The description for good achievement includes a statement:

From each different starting point, the proportions of pupils making expected progress and the proportions exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are close to or above national figures. For disadvantaged pupils, the proportions are similar to, or improving in relation to, those for other pupils nationally and in the school. (Ofsted, 2015a: 71)

RAISEonline includes data about pupils' progress from different starting points and how it compares with the national averages. The link between progress and teaching is clear from the Ofsted guidance above and reflects the views of interviewees who consider that the grade for teaching will be the same as the grade for achievement. This seems to be confirmed by an analysis of 100 of the most recent primary inspection reports (Watchsted, 2015). I drew on the data from the Watchsted analysis to produce Figure 5.1 below. The figure shows that the proportions of achievement and teaching grades are identical and very close to the proportion of overall effectiveness judgements.

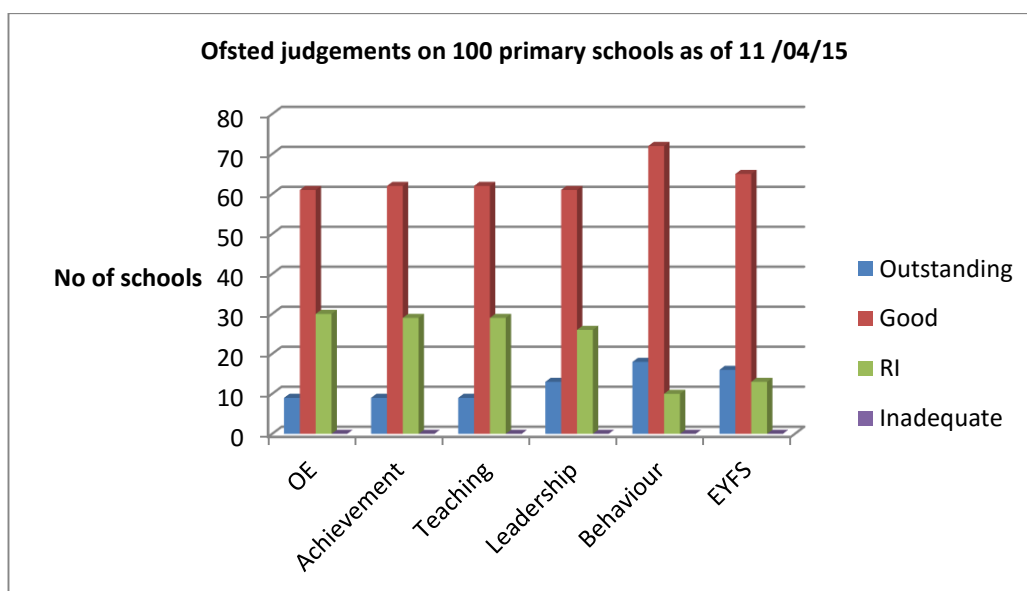


Figure 5.1 Latest 100 primary school grades (as of 11 April 2015) from Watchsted website

In the most recent (by April 2015) Ofsted inspections, the figure above shows that the proportions of schools where the teaching grade was outstanding, good, or requires improvement were identical to the proportion of achievement grades; no schools were judged inadequate in this sample. To be sure that the link between achievement and teaching grades was accurate, I looked at details of a sample of 20 primary school Ofsted inspection reports and confirmed that the teaching and achievement judgements were the same. The figure shows that there were differences in other grades, such as behaviour, which was sometimes judged to be better than teaching or achievement. Similarly, the quality of early years (EYFS) provision was sometimes judged differently to other grades. This difference for early years, possibly reflects a point raised by some interviewees (and my own experience) about the variation in inspectors' views about quality in the provision of early years education. This point was not explored during the research.

The link between inspection grades for achievement, teaching and overall effectiveness was also commented on by Waldegrave and Simons (2014: 26-31), who confirm that for inspections between September 2012 and July 2013 there was very close agreement between the teaching and achievement grades for primary schools and 'for many schools – particularly at the lower end – the data drives the Achievement subgrade, and perhaps also the Quality of Teaching subgrade, and these drive the overall grade for the school' (Waldegrave and Simons, 2014:29). This confirms the interviewees' suggestions that the data drives the overall effectiveness grade. Since the 'no teaching grade in a lesson' rule from September 2014, I believe that there is now a stronger link than before between the grades for teaching and achievement as inspectors have to judge teaching over time.

5.5 Views about changes to the teaching criteria over the years

Many of the interviewees' comments related to how the Ofsted criteria for teaching have changed over the years. I have divided their comments into the following sub

headings: focus on pupils' progress; focus on assessment and marking; raising the bar; the language of the criteria; new developments since 2012.

5.5.1 Focus on pupils' progress

The interviewees nearly all commented on how the teaching criteria have moved away from a focus on teaching and the performance of the teacher towards a focus on pupils' learning and progress. Examples of how interviewees spoke about these changes:

Really, the change in focus has been on pupils, whereas back when we had our last Ofsted it was teachers were almost not putting on a show but it was like what the teacher did, whereas now the shift has very much been what are the pupils doing. [Pauline]

Well over the time I've noticed huge changes where we've kind of had to perform to a dance to now looking at teaching and not just a snapshot of a lesson and you're not judging the teacher, you're judging quality of teaching and that is over time and it is dovetailed with book scrutiny, the way that children manage their learning, all of those things, so those changes quite rightly have taken place. [Bindu]

In 2009, I found it very judgemental of the teachers. It was very focussed on grading the teachers... there has been a huge shift now. They're looking at learning. They are looking at children's responses. They are talking to the children, they are spending time, they're listening to the children read and I think they may be a little more understanding now that if a teacher is having a bad day because they're anxious or whatever it happens to be, by looking at the children's work and by talking to the children if they can see that those children are making excellent progress, then there has to be good teacher's teaching, so I think that has been a change. [Helen]

[In earlier inspections] they were looking at the teacher and how the teacher talked. Yes, whereas now it's much more about what impact is the

teacher having on the pupils and the progress the children are making within the lesson. So it's gone from what does the teacher do, do they do a lovely performance, to what are the children getting from this? How has the teacher impacted on the children? [Ann]

I think it's very much they are looking at the progress of the children as opposed to people performing in a classroom and therefore it's far more about triangulation of evidence now, instead of what has happened to that twenty minutes or half an hour that people are in a classroom. [Mary]

Well the focus is now on learning. Even though they are grade descriptors for teaching actually what you're really going in to look at is the teaching, but it's more a focus on what the learning for the children is, which is what we had to do as a management team to put the emphasis there. [Pauline]

The focus on progress and the progress children are making. I think that is very fair in judging teaching over time. [Carole]

I think over the years, the way the lessons were structured was very much centred around what Ofsted wanted. Now I think they're not looking for a set way people are teaching, it's far more about the progress of the children. [Mary]

All of the interviewees' responses above suggest a recognition that the inspection criteria for teaching have focused increasingly on the impact on pupils' learning and progress. In each framework, inspectors have been expected to make a link between the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. However, the link has been made increasingly explicit in each framework, especially since 2000. For example, guidance for the 2003 framework (Ofsted, 2003: 61) states that 'the quality of teaching must be judged first and foremost in terms of its effect on learning'. In 2009, the evaluation schedule (Ofsted, 2009a: 31) informs inspectors to evaluate how well teaching 'promotes learning, progress and enjoyment for all pupils'. In the January 2012 handbook (Ofsted, 2012a: 32), it states that 'The most important role of teaching is to promote learning and to raise pupils' achievement'.

This statement was amended slightly in the latest guidance (Ofsted, 2015a) to:

'The most important role of teaching is to promote learning and the acquisition of knowledge by pupils and to raise achievement'. The expression 'acquisition of knowledge' reflects a possible political influence on the criteria as it reflects the Coalition Government's emphasis on pupils acquiring knowledge, as expressed in the white paper, *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE, 2010a).

One interviewee thought that the criteria 'have narrowed into more prescriptive and more kind of small things rather a big overview' and went on to say 'there was a period when inspectors were saying we want to see progress in lesson. Sometimes you do, but more often than not that isn't going to happen.' [Angela]. Another head also referred to the focus on seeing progress in lessons:

Seems quite recently that there is an obsession with progress in lessons. I don't know whether this is a perceived thing from heads or whether inspectors really are looking for progress in lessons. Talking to other headteachers there seems to be this obsession with demonstrating progress in lessons all the time, even in very short periods of time. [Liz]

The point about inspectors wanting to see progress in lessons is one of the Ofsted myths that seems to have become accepted by schools despite there being no real written justification for them (Ofsted, 2015c). However, the fact that an interviewee mentioned it suggests that despite the fact that heads know that requirements have changed, there is still uncertainty and possibly a lack of trust in the inspectors. This reflects the dominant role of inspectors in the field of inspection and 'symbolic violence' towards schools, which are recipients of the criteria and inspections. Schools have little control over the criteria and framework for inspections, although they are invited to respond during the consultation processes and many headteachers are now becoming Ofsted inspectors themselves.

5.5.2 Focus on assessment and marking

Some interviewees spoke about how inspectors now give a greater emphasis to assessment for learning:

And the use of assessment for learning. It's much much [more important now]...really good assessment for learning in the lessons was needed to be graded as outstanding. That was something which we really found and I think as well is that something as well which we found from schools and friends who teach in schools, how the big, big thing now is the quality of feedback. [Pauline]

This view is reflected in the way that criteria have changed over the years. Each framework, from the earliest (1994 for primary schools) has included assessment as an area that inspectors look at. However, the location of assessment has moved around in each framework: it was initially included as a separate area, but since 2005 has been included as part of the quality of teaching (Ofsted, 2005b). The criteria linked to assessment of pupils' learning have become increasingly prominent and detailed. For example, in 2012, to achieve grade 1 (outstanding) the description says:

Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning' and 'Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress regularly and accurately. They ensure that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. (Ofsted, 2012a: 34)

The increasing emphasis on assessment may have been influenced by the prominence of assessment for learning in the late 1990s (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Interviewees also referred to the increasing inspection focus on how teachers mark pupils' work.

I just think that it keeps changing, doesn't it? The expectation will be in one particular area and then it will move and now the big focus is on the pupil progress which has always been, but it's now the marking and the response marking and how much time goes into that. [Helen]

I think sometimes teachers mark for Ofsted. Really. Seriously. [Bindu]

The reference to 'response marking' is the expectation that pupils will record a reply to what the teachers have written on their work. Headteachers interviewed suggested that they feel compelled to implement what they consider to be Ofsted's expectations of good practice in marking pupils' work:

We tried to get them [teachers] familiar, but also pulling out statements about marking- what you need to do to get your marking to at least good. [Liz]

The reference to 'marking' has been more explicit in the Ofsted (2009a: 32) criteria, where the criteria for outstanding included 'Marking and dialogue between teachers, other adults and pupils are consistently of a very high quality. Pupils understand in detail how to improve their work and are consistently supported in doing so'. In 2015, the Ofsted guidance (2015a:61) stated that one of the criterion for outstanding teaching is 'Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make significant and sustained gains in their learning'. The interviewees were attempting to ensure that their practice was in line with what they perceive Ofsted's expectations to be. This practice may be positive for the pupils but I did not explore this perspective during the interviews.

5.5.3 Ofsted raising the bar?

Several interviewees considered that the criteria have become increasingly challenging, so that they feel it is more difficult now to attain the top grade of outstanding.

They've upped everything in a sense to get outstanding. There seems to be different to what they were looking for before. I mean I'm thinking that one of the things that we looked at was previously to be good... as long as you were addressing the misconceptions, that came under the good, that now is part of your general requires improvement you should be addressing them anyway and teaching to what the children need. [Ann]

We found as a staff that satisfactory and requires improvement are essentially seen as the same thing, but they are just different titles and it's just how much more is expected to be seen or observed in a lesson in order for a teacher to be classed as good or better. [Pauline]

Interviewees were saying that they feel that it is more difficult now to be judged 'good' or 'outstanding' than it was in the past. The reference to the 'requires improvement' judgement was another common theme amongst the interviewees. The term 'requires improvement' was introduced in September 2012 by the new HMCI, Sir Michael Wilshaw, who explained to headteachers (Ofsted, 2012c: 3) that he wanted to raise expectations and to 'do away with the word satisfactory. If a school is not yet good, we will say it requires improvement'. He added that 'Our national ambition should be for all schools to be good or better.' This change was not well received by several of the teachers I interviewed.

I compared the descriptions for good teaching between 2009 and 2015 (see appendix 6) in order to determine whether interviewees' perceptions that the 'bar has been raised' are accurate. Compared to the 2009 criteria, there is more detail in 2015 and a clearer expectation about the impact of teaching on progress, particularly for different groups of pupils. The 2015 criteria do appear to be more challenging and harder to attain as 'teaching must be 'consistently good' and that most pupils make good progress, which is not stated as strongly in 2009. There are some significant differences. For example, there is a reference to homework in 2015 and none in 2009 (though it was present in earlier frameworks). The 2009 descriptors include a reference to the use of resources, including new technology, which does not appear in 2015. It is difficult to compare the descriptors, because

the criteria are open to so much subjective interpretation and are not expected to be checklists for inspectors' judgements.

5.5.4 The language of the criteria

Several interviewees spoke about the language of the criteria and how difficult it is to interpret them.

I think the difference between good and outstanding is minimal so how on earth do they judge someone good or someone outstanding. When you go through the criteria..[here's] an example, outstanding: 'all teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils'; good: 'teachers have high expectations. [Helen]

I don't think that Ofsted are [sic] clear enough. I think there needs to be clarity. I think there is too much fluffiness and I think it's open to interpretation and I think it needs to be much clearer and I think that all the schools that I've been into, the heads are still so worried. [Bindu]

I think what we found was that .. some of the early differences between good and understanding were the vocabulary used and not really much of anything else. [Mary]

One interviewee challenged Ofsted's use of certain words in the criteria:

[Reading from the 2014 criteria] "teachers and other adults authoritatively impart knowledge to ensure that students are engaged in learning and generate high levels of commitment to learning". Authoritatively: now that's an interesting word. Now you see I wouldn't put that. [Bindu]

The word 'authoritatively' is used to define the way that adults impart knowledge in part of the outstanding teaching criteria (Ofsted, 2014a: 61). The word is not further defined in the handbook. This description that forms part of the outstanding teaching judgement (though inspectors are encouraged to use a best fit approach

(Ofsted, 2014a: 61)) appears to be equivalent to the bullet point in the good teaching criteria, which states that 'teachers and other adults create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested and engaged.' The statements are not really comparable as one is about imparting knowledge and the other a positive climate. Outstanding teaching generates 'high levels of commitment and learning' whereas good teaching creates a climate in which pupils are 'interested and engaged'. This point reflects the amount of changes to the criteria and, as interviewees have said, how the language is unclear and open to interpretation. This makes it difficult for headteachers to prepare for an inspection because the rules of Ofsted's 'game' are unclear and keep changing, reflecting Ofsted's symbolic power in the field of inspection.

5.5.5 Developments since 2012

Interviewees appreciated some more recent developments, attributed to Sir Michael Wilshaw, such as the emphasis on making judgements over time, rather than just on the basis of the snapshot seen during the two days of the inspection. In the Ofsted evaluation schedules between 2009 and 2012 (Ofsted, 2009a; 2011a), the only references to 'over time' were to do with judgements about pupils' attainment and progress. After 2012, there were several references to 'over time', including in the criteria for attainment and progress, but also, for the first time, in relation to the quality of teaching:

These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the school as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons. (footnote to the teaching grade descriptors, Ofsted, 2012b: 34).

This change was acknowledged and appreciated by interviewees:

There is much more emphasis on progress and learning, and progress over time than in the lesson. [Fatima]

Learning over time –that’s the one we like to see because sometimes on the day someone goes into meltdown and you know they are a very good teacher. You know that their results are always very good and you can see in their books they’re very good and you’ve observed them in lots of different situations and I think that’s really important for Ofsted to take that into account because your best teachers will just panic, because of the amount of pressure there is just with the word ‘Ofsted’ on a teacher. [Ann]

But I think the criteria now are fairer and the judgement of teaching over time, maybe that’s another change, is giving a better picture rather than showcase lessons. [Angela]

There is the over-time aspect which has taken a while for us to really find clarity into what all the bits actually mean. [Hugh]

...now looking at teaching and not just a snapshot of a lesson and you’re not judging the teacher, you’re judging quality of teaching and that is over time and it is dovetailed with book scrutiny, the way that children manage their learning, all of those things, so those changes quite rightly have taken place. [Bindu]

The comments above suggest that in the main the interviewees were positive about the way that inspectors judge teaching, which now entails looking at a wide range of evidence and trying to get a picture of the ‘typicality of teaching’ (see, for example, Ofsted 2015a: 59). The interviewees said that they feel that this approach provides a fairer assessment of the quality of teaching in their school and supports their own practice.

5.6 Perceived political influences on the criteria

Most of the interviewees considered that there have been political influences on the criteria and on inspection generally:

I think there's always going to be influences, because education is a political thing nowadays, I think that's just what it's like, you know. I just think there is a push towards data, there's a push towards making progress and things like three levels progress suddenly has become this expectation for 30% of your children. Well that's a huge, huge move and shift and that is reflected in what you are doing in the classroom. [Ann]

I think they are inextricably linked. How long have you got? It's all about the political agenda. It's completely about policing schools. It's about accountability, and currently it's about an individual's ideology. [Angela]

Yes it is political. I think as well it's very much,... lately all you hear about is how this country is being compared to other countries and how under-performing it is when compared to countries in Asia. [Pauline]

You know Ofsted are supposed to be independent from government and all this, but I'm not so sure. You know these appointments are [political] appointments, you know the chair of Ofsted suddenly ousted out and you know should have had another term. All of this, so I think there are politics behind it, but you know I think that Ofsted in terms of the way they are looking at things, for instance governors...[reference to greater focus on governance in inspection]. [Bindu]

The interviewees' comments suggest that they consider that there have been political influences on Ofsted, linked to the need for greater accountability and greater focus on measuring performance. Angela's reference to an 'individual's ideology' is presumably about the Secretary of State for education at the time, Michael Gove. The comment from Bindu above relates to the perceived political appointment of the chief inspector and to the recent resignation of the chair of

Ofsted, which she suggested was a political decision. This comment also refers to the greater focus on governance in the recent inspection frameworks, following the high profile given to governance in the Coalition's white paper, *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE, 2010a) and in the wake of the Trojan Horse affair (Beale, 2015; Clarke, 2014; HOC, 2015a; 2015b). Baxter (2014a:1) noted that 'Since 2012, Ofsted has intensified its focus on the inspection of school governance, insisting that it is integral to the leadership and management function of schools'.

Most of the interviewees' comments about political influence were about inspections in general and not the teaching criteria. However, there were some references to political influence that have a direct impact on the teaching criteria. These related to the focus on looking at different groups of pupils when observing lesson, particularly those eligible for the 'pupil premium'. The Coalition Government introduced funding known as the pupil premium from 2011 (DfE, 2010b), targeted at pupils eligible for free school meals currently or in the past six years, as well as children in the care of the local authority and children of members of the armed forces. Interviewees said:

One of the things obviously is pupil premium and how they look at that in lessons, you know. They did ask us which children ..., how many children. We made sure our teachers [know]...also have a pack that had pupil premium identification on it and all of that. So we had that and we had the lesson plans. [Ann]

Yes, reading, and grammar, of skills, not skills, of knowledge, they use the word knowledge, pupil premium. I just look for the keywords. They stand out. They may as well put them in bold. So they're things that are very much aligned with current government thinking or focus. [Carole]

The focus on pupil premium is very much linked very closely to government policy. [Angela]

One other key thing is around groups, where before I wasn't as aware, even though we were aware in our school...the definition of groups has

grown and my understanding has grown much much more. We were aware of free school meal children. Obviously now we have got pupil premium. [Fatiha]

The interviewees' perceptions about the importance of inspectors making judgements about different groups, with a focus on those eligible for the pupil premium, is consistent with guidance in the inspection handbooks (Ofsted, 2012b; 2014a; 2015a) and in additional guidance to inspectors from the ISPs (for example, Tribal, 2013 and SERCO, 2014). Lead inspectors are expected to report on: how these eligible pupils are taught; whether the attainment gap with their non-eligible peers is closing and what it is in terms of average point scores²⁵; how the additional pupil premium funds are used and what the impact is; and governors' knowledge about the use and impact of pupil premium funds. (Ofsted, 2015a).

At the time of the interviews, between January and June 2014, there were two new education policy developments that were on headteachers' minds: performance management and the new National Curriculum (to start in September 2014). All of the interviewees spoke about these developments, for example, Helen said: 'I think performance management is a huge focus now.' Performance related pay (DfE, 2013a) was soon to come into force and headteachers spoke about how they use the Ofsted criteria to evaluate their teachers' performance. However, the interviewees' comments about performance management were not directly related to inspection, although their own practice of monitoring teaching and whether or not to grade lessons was sometimes influenced by Ofsted's expectations as discussed in the next section.

5.7 How headteachers use the teaching criteria in their schools

The interviewees spoke about how they used the teaching criteria in their schools. They all indicated that they discussed the latest Ofsted criteria with their staff, but

²⁵ Average points scores (APS) are measures of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages.

most adapted the criteria for use in their schools. They were attempting to look at teaching over time and drawing on a wider range of evidence than just lessons:

So when we're looking at quality of teaching, it's not just looking at that lesson, the quality of teaching must include your book scrutinies, your pupil progress meetings and all of that side of things as well to give an overall picture, so that at the end of a term there will be a grade for each of those and that gives you your feel for your teacher. [Ann]

So you know I think the criteria are really important, but it's equally important to dovetail that with your school's expectations and for everyone to be involved in that, not just teachers but all staff. [Bindu]

I do [use the Ofsted criteria] but I've tailored what we haveI was using this morning. [Helen]

They [middle leaders] got together and sort of changed the criteria, mixed it around, made it fit the Ofsted criteria more. So it was really sort of a school thing and then it went to the staff after that, so they are all very, very aware of what is expected of them. [Mary]

We took some of the main headings from the Ofsted criteria, the grade descriptors and literally just pulled them under quality of teaching, quality of learning and pupil progress and we just wrote what we saw were the evidence, things like that. [Ann]

We don't give a grade for performance management, we say whether their objectives are met or partially met, it's just not using the [terms] outstanding, good or requires improvement. [Mary]

Performance management, what contributes to that is data observation, scrutiny and pupil voice, so we will grade that. We've stopped giving out grades, it's not helpful. We would grade just because from a monitoring point of view it just helps, but really it's just trying to pick out two things one is the strengths and next steps for the individual and one if they would then

collect into something that's bit more school- wide then we could do that through CPD. [Hugh]

The interviewees were talking generally about performance management, which was at that time a new statutory requirement (DfE, 2013a), with performance related pay coming in September 2014. They were also aware that it was an area that Ofsted inspectors would be asking about when the school was inspected. Heads had received information about this in a personalised letter to each school from Sir Michael Wilshaw (Ofsted, 2013a). The letter asked headteachers to provide inspectors with a range of information about performance management including the proportions of teachers who have progressed along the main pay scale and progressed to the upper pay scale.

The most recent Ofsted criteria for evaluating the school's leadership and management include specific references to performance management. For example, the descriptor for outstanding leadership and management includes:

Leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning and provide focused professional development for all staff, especially those that are newly qualified and at an early stage of their careers. This is underpinned by searching performance management that encourages, challenges and supports teachers' improvement. As a result, the overall quality of teaching is at least consistently good and improving. (Ofsted, 2015a: 49)

The quote above represents an example of how in recent years, since 2012, school leadership is judged in terms of how it has impacted on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Headteachers I interviewed were aware of this and so their approach to performance management was also likely to be influenced by Ofsted's expectations (i.e. performativity). This is consistent with Muijs and Chapman's (2009: 41) assertion that 'organizations will concentrate their efforts on those things they are judged on'. The interviewees were concentrating on areas that they knew Ofsted would be looking at closely on inspection. This

might not be a fair comment since the heads may well have undertaken performance management because they consider it to be valuable and important, even if there was no Ofsted, but I did not ask this question.

5.8 Grading the quality of teaching

Most interviewees said that they grade teaching for the purpose of performance management, drawing on a wide range of evidence as suggested by some of the responses above. The interviewees indicated that they felt the need to give grades, either because teachers wanted them or because they felt it would be useful when they are inspected by Ofsted. All of them were considering not grading lessons, or had already decided to go down this route, for example, interviewee Hugh (see comment above).

The issue about grading was a concern to several interviewees, and they were particularly unhappy in some cases with 'having' to use the term 'requires improvement' as Sarah said:

However, then people did want grades. They wanted to know what their grades were. It sticks in my throat that 'requires improvement' [is] for anybody below good because quite honestly your outstanding teacher will say 'oh my God, I need to improve by doing this'. So everybody believes they can be better than they are, so why would you pick on the person who is not good, which is the person who probably needs their confidence built the most.

The interviews took place at a time when inspectors were still grading the quality of teaching when they observed a lesson and some were grading lessons, although this was not expected by Ofsted (since 2009). The whole business of lesson observations and indeed inspections was under review during 2014 as Ofsted issued a consultation document on plans for a new framework from September 2015 (Ofsted, 2015d). The interviewees were aware that Ofsted was reviewing its

policy on grading teaching in lessons and the advice to inspectors on not suggesting that Ofsted has a preferred teaching style, as HMCI, Sir Michael Wilshaw had emphasised in a number of speeches:

And let me repeat, more times than Boris Johnson has denied he wants David Cameron's job, Ofsted does not have a preferred teaching style. Inspectors are interested in the impact of teaching on learning, progress and outcomes. I accept that it's taken time to get this through to every one of our inspectors but I want to make this commitment to you this morning – I will personally take issue with any inspector who ignores our guidance and tries to tell teachers there is only one way to teach. (Wilshaw, 2014)

This missive was followed by a flurry of guidance from ISPs and Ofsted to inspectors to warn them about report writing that sounded as if there was a preferred approach to teaching. For example:

Inspectors must report in a way that does not give the impression that Ofsted has a preference for a particular structure of lesson or style of teaching or assessment. (Ofsted, 2014b: 2).

Do not use formulaic statements about teacher-talk dominating lessons, pupils moving to a wide range of activities, matching work to individual needs, or the lack of 'independent learning' and so on. It is perfectly acceptable for teacher talk to dominate lessons if pupils learn well as a result. Being 'passive' is not necessarily always a bad thing for pupils. Focus instead on whether children are being taught knowledge and skills, or being helped to understand. (Guidance on writing the report, Ofsted, 2014c: 9).

The tone of the last quote above reflects the dictatorial way that inspectors have been treated in the field of inspection. This seems to support the idea of an institutional habitus for inspectors who rarely deploy their agency to protest against this system of 'symbolic violence'. Bourdieu (1977: 192) describes symbolic

violence as the 'gentle, invisible form of violence, which is never recognised as such' and can lead to 'misrecognition' (Swartz, 1997:43) by the dominant agent. Bourdieu's examples are often to do with social class and relationships; however, there is synergy with the field of inspection when he says:

Once a system of mechanisms has been constituted capable of objectively ensuring the reproduction of the established order by its own motion...the dominant class have only to let the system they dominate take its own course in order to exercise their domination..' (Bourdieu, 1977: 190)

In this quote, the 'system of mechanisms' could refer to the field of inspection and the dominant class being HMI in Ofsted, with schools 'dominated' by having no choice but to accept being inspected. Similarly, additional inspectors have no choice but to follow the Ofsted rules as their economic capital may depend on being deployed on inspections; this may explain why they do not complain about the way they are treated more robustly. This could be the focus of further research.

HMI Robert, whom I interviewed around that time (April 2014), explained that the topic of observing lessons and grading teaching was under discussion within Ofsted and HMI were piloting inspecting without grading teaching in lessons. Another HMI interviewee (Susan) described the reaction of a teacher during a pilot inspection where the team did not give grades:

I was feeding back in this way just the strengths...and she said "so what grade are you giving me?" and I said "but we're not grading" and she said, "but I want to know was that a good lesson, an outstanding lesson, what grade would you give me?". I said, "I'm telling you these are the things that contributed to learning and I think these are the things ...", and she said "no, I want a grade, what is the point of you coming if you don't give a lesson grade?".

The quote is interesting in a number of ways. It illustrates the pressure inspectors are under to make a judgement and the expectation that teachers have of the need to be graded. The teacher's response possibly reflects an unconscious acceptance of the need to be judged by someone with greater symbolic capital; an institutional habitus – 'dispositions and orientations that have developed interactively over their lifetime' (Smyth and Banks, 2012: 264). Burke et al (2013: 166) argue for the concept of a collective, or institutional, habitus particularly in relation to educational institutions. They quote Bourdieu who said that habitus is 'collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of the conductor' (Bourdieu 1990: 53). Burke et al (ibid) suggest that 'individual habitus can be deepened by considering not only its relationship to the social field, but also the interconnections that exist between habitus within those fields that are constituted by collective practices'. In relation to educational institutions, they add, 'schools and other institutions can directly shape the habitus and practices of individuals through their organisational forms and collective practices'.

I consider that the idea of institutional habitus can relate across schools as well as within schools. Burke et al (ibid) consider that 'formal institutions such as schools and education systems are also socially realised phenomena'. Headteachers and teachers across schools share features of 'socially realised phenomena' in the field of inspection and this view of a commonality of response was evident in my discussions with headteachers and teachers.

5.9 Influence of research on the criteria

I asked interviewees if they were aware of any research that Ofsted has drawn on to prepare the teaching criteria. Most interviewees considered that Ofsted probably makes use of research to inform its teaching criteria, although they were mostly very vague about this:

I am sure it has. I am not aware of any particular research that has influenced Ofsted. [Mary]

I can't give you an incident [of research]. No, I don't know. I mean I would expect that and I would suggest that it is all evidence- based, because of the reports that you read. I wouldn't have said I have gone into the details of it but you know that things are driven by wherever the evidence comes from, whether it is being Asian maths, or whether it would be Scandinavian curriculum or whatever it is, but no.[Hugh]

I think there's always lots of interesting research going on. I'm not sure how much is taken on board, because when you listen to people like John West Burnham and you listen to other researchers like him, he always presents a very clear case on what pedagogy of teaching is, learning is, but it doesn't seem sometimes to relate to what is happening when you get things like your Ofsted frameworks and particularly when you're getting your new national curriculum, things like that. You do question where it has come from, what's the theory behind it. [Ann]

This last headteacher, Ann, is suggesting that there is a mismatch between what current research is saying, as expressed by educationalists that she has heard speak, such as John West Burnham (2012), and what appears in the Ofsted criteria. It may be that headteachers want more, not less, direction on what is good pedagogy in Ofsted's teaching criteria.

One of the interviewees stated that she found inspiration from Ofsted publications that promote and illustrate good practice. She referred, with much enthusiasm, to Ofsted's own 'research' through publications such as *Reading by Six* (Ofsted, 2010):

When you look beneath it, literacy is key. I remember when *Reading by Six* came out. Ofsted does some amazing research. I copied it and bound it for every teacher. I said, "Read it". How can we be against this? Do we want to deny children to be able to read? It is using the research and when you read that, these aren't all leafy schools. These are schools with lots of challenges, more than us sometimes. If they can do it... [Fatiha]

This notion of Ofsted's publications, which are based on data from school and survey inspection reports, as research chimes with the views of HMI who also considered that Ofsted's own publications, based on inspection evidence, are a good source of research (see section 4.5 in the previous chapter). The fact that interviewees could not recall much other educational (academic) research that may have influenced the Ofsted teaching criteria may reflect a view that Ofsted has not drawn on recent research. It could also be consistent with the fact that Ofsted does not want to give the impression that it has a particular view about what constitutes good pedagogy (as discussed earlier). One headteacher referred to The Sutton Trust, but could not remember what Ofsted criterion it was linked to. The Sutton Trust has produced a number of recent research publications, some based on meta-analyses, about teaching approaches that impact on pupils' learning (for example, Coe et al, 2014; Sammons et al, 2015; Sutton Trust, 2009).

One of the interviewees, Sarah, responded emphatically that Ofsted's criteria are not drawn from current educational research:

No, do you? No. Good grief. Somebody somewhere in a room has written that haven't they? Have they even spoken to... maybe they got some pet schools they talk to, but, no, there is nothing that's embedded in research, I don't think.

As one of the HMI interviewees, Robert, stated, Ofsted has a dilemma, of, on the one hand being aware of what research is saying about how children learn best, and on the other of not wanting to be seen to be promoting a particular teaching approach. As he said: 'it's always been our [HMI] view that we haven't had a preferred model of teaching', a view which I quickly learned to adhere to when I joined HMI in 1991. The focus of our (HMI) observations and judgements was on the impact on pupils' learning- 'if it works it is good', I was taught. Despite this, early Ofsted documents and guidance did appear to promote a particular teaching approach, albeit very generic. For example, the earliest Ofsted handbooks (for

example, Ofsted, 1994a: 27) stated that ‘teaching quality should be judged to the extent to which...teachers have clear objectives for their lessons; pupils are aware of these objectives...’ and in the 1995 version (Ofsted, 1995: 66), it said that judgements should be based on ‘the extent to which teachers plan effectively and use time and resources effectively...’. Other components of the criteria have changed little and refer to teachers’ subject knowledge, expectations and assessment, for example. The earlier references to planning and objectives may have resulted in performative practices in which teachers produced detailed plans for inspections and made sure that they shared learning objectives with pupils. The latter practice is, in my experience of inspecting and visiting schools, now part and parcel of every primary teacher’s repertoire.

The 2009 Handbook for Inspection (Ofsted, 2009a: 32) included some aspects of the grade criteria for outstanding teaching that could be interpreted as promoting certain pedagogical practice over others (see appendix 6 (4)). The criteria are broad and generic, with a strong focus on the impact on pupils through phrases such as ‘pupils are making exceptional progress’, ‘challenge and inspire pupils’, ‘pupils understand’, ‘impact on the quality of learning’. Other phrases in the criteria are more specific about teaching approaches; for example, ‘Resources, including new technology, make a marked contribution’. This suggests that teachers should be using new technology and other resources (though I am not sure that this was Ofsted’s intention). Also, the reference to ‘systematically and effectively check pupils’ understanding throughout lessons’ suggests an approach which many teachers have come to associate with an Ofsted expectation, so they keep stopping to review learning when being observed. Ofsted has identified the ‘myths’ about what inspectors expect to see in publications such as *Moving English Forward* (Ofsted, 2012d) and more recent letters to schools (for example, Ofsted, 2014d; 2015c).

5.10 Further comments on the criteria and whether we need Ofsted criteria

I asked interviewees for their general comments on the criteria and if they felt that there was anything missing, that they think should be included. They mostly commented on the criteria's ambiguity (as described earlier in section 5.5) and 'loose phrases' and how they are open to interpretation.

If you look at it, how many good teachers would argue with some of the things that are there? It's actually all about your interpretation. There are words like 'exceptionally well' and you might say what does that look like? I'm not saying this isn't challenging, it is very challenging. [Fatiha]

One interviewee (Mary) felt that there should be something about children's resilience in the criteria and 'whether they were able to access things independently'. Inspectors have been warned against using the term 'independence' in inspection reports. It is a 'forbidden' word (Ofsted, 2014b; 2014c), as it suggests a preferred teaching approach. At least two interviewees said that they would like to have descriptor for requires improvement, as Liz said: 'What is difficult is that you haven't got something for requires improvement'. Another interviewee asked, 'Requires improvement...I think, feels more negative and does it have the desired impact?' [Carole].

It seems that the heads have most concerns about how to interpret the criteria and the fact that teaching is graded on a four-point scale. One interviewee (Sarah) would prefer a 'continuum' saying that 'you could put a dot on the continuum that would be great'. Some of the headteachers I interviewed have bought into being part of an organisation called Challenge Partners²⁶, which involves annual peer reviews. I am also a lead reviewer for Challenge Partners and was aware that Sarah was referring to the continuum that Challenge Partners reviewers use to 'grade' aspects of lessons (such as challenge and learning).

²⁶ See Challenge Partners' website: <http://www.challengepartners.org>.

When asked whether we need Ofsted criteria at all, most headteachers responded in the affirmative, though with reservations in nearly all cases. Some of their responses are included below:

I do think it has focused people having Ofsted. I do think it makes you aware of what your school is doing, but I do think that people would do that anyway now. I think there is that understanding that we are responsible for these children and that you can't catch up in terms of if they lose a year. That's a big chunk of their life. [If] they've had poor teaching, that's a big chunk of a child's life in a school and that we have to make it matter. But I'm not sure measuring everything we do is the way to do it. [Ann]

I actually think that Ofsted body is a good thing, absolutely. I think they should be independent, etc. but I think that too many schools live in fear actually. I think the inspection process shouldn't be called inspection. It should be called something else and I think that will allow for schools to just, I don't know, be involved more, be involved more in the process. [Bindu]

Yes, I think a set of criteria then helps that, because otherwise you'd have to re-invent the wheel almost and we've changed our criteria to suit what we are doing in the school. [Mary]

Yes, let's be accountable and have criteria which should contribute to consistency... there is a feeling that because you have to do this and, particularly of where the school is, that is constraining what you do to a certain extent, even though you can see the reasons for it. [Hugh]

All of the interviewees suggested that having an external body like Ofsted, with published criteria, is useful to provide some sort of consistency across schools, although there are issues about consistency. They appreciate having criteria, although they are not entirely happy with them. Their institutional habitus is evident in their general acceptance of the status quo and the dominance of Ofsted.

Bourdieu (1977:195) suggests that the 'condition for the permanence of domination

cannot concede without the complicity of the whole group'. In this case, the group is that of headteachers. They accept that they are accountable to the parents. Performativity is apparent in the way that they seem to spend a lot of time ensuring that they are 'Ofsted-ready', through their own systems of monitoring, trying to interpret the Ofsted criteria and keeping up-to-date with the many changes to the Ofsted framework and its new priorities. Performativity is considered in the next section.

5.11 Performativity

I did not use the term 'performativity' in the interviews, but deduced it from interviewees' responses to several of my questions. Much has been written about schools and performativity, particularly in relation to inspection (For example, Ball, 1997; 2003; 2013; Jeffrey, 2002; Osgood, 2006; Perryman, 2003; 2005; 2007). Ball (2013: 1096 - 1131) describes performativity as a 'culture or a system of 'terror''. He defines it as a 'regime of accountability that employs judgements, comparison and displays as means of control, attrition and change'. These descriptions can all be applied to inspection. Perryman (2009: 616) describes performativity as the 'mechanism in which schools demonstrate, through documentation and pedagogy that they have been normalised, and inspection, through surveillance and panoptic techniques, examines this process'. Perryman (2009) suggests that schools feel obliged to conform to what they perceive as Ofsted's expectations, and this was clear from the interviewees' comments:

I think it [monitoring] was started because there was Ofsted. Would I continue on with it? Probably, I think it's a very, very good way of keeping on top of what is going on in the school, but I think it's got to be done in a nurturing way, which is why I want to get away from grading lessons.

[Mary]

I want to know how they are judging me. Even when any of us is observed, we think, "What do they want? What is the right answer?" That is why the 'learning over time' way is freeing for teachers. [Fatiha]

They [teachers] are doing the things that you have to monitor and that's the sad thing. We've gone from not monitoring anything to monitoring everything virtually, just so we can show we are doing self-evaluation and sometimes I think you lose that spark and spontaneity. [Ann]

There are so many changes; sometimes it's really quite frightening. The speed at which Ofsted changes or makes small changes, but for schools you are in danger if you're not secure in your own school and where it's at and where you need to go, you end up reacting and putting things in place that match Ofsted criteria that actually can change in six months' time. [Carole]

These comments reflect the view that heads are monitoring more now as a result of Ofsted and to be prepared for Ofsted, but also because they believe it is a good thing. A very significant point was made by Fatiha in that she wants to know how she (her school) will be judged by Ofsted and hence she pores over all the Ofsted handbooks and guidance. I believe that this is the crux of what is happening to schools as they become more sophisticated and knowledgeable after 20 years of Ofsted. They want to be ahead of the game by unpicking its rules – the criteria. The difficulty they have is that the criteria are generic and vague and can be interpreted differently by different teachers, and even inspectors and are changed frequently.

A few interviewees described how their teachers adapt what they are doing when being observed, even though they know that inspectors now judge teaching over time and are less concerned about the teaching performance:

I think that when people are being inspected, [they] don't do things they would normally do in a lesson. Yes, every so often because they know that a mini-plenary is what's expected. It's only expected if it's pertinent to the lesson, but I still think this does, any structure is going to make you want to do it..[Ann]

We have been having conversations about adapting the lesson when someone walks in so you can demonstrate progress by.. sort of feeding children the questioning to be able to ..manipulate that. All feels a little bit like a game. [Liz]

And even though we may use additional information, additional documentation, when the inspectors come, this is what they're guided by, so it's important we know what they'll be using, and it's not just pulled out of the bag. [Carole]

The reference to 'mini-plenary' reverts back to an earlier point about teachers' misconceptions about what inspectors expect to see in a lesson (Ofsted, 2012c; 2014d). The allusion to 'additional documentation' refers to the need to provide inspectors with contextual information about the pupils in each class, including progress data to help inspectors judge teaching over time (Ofsted, 2015a: 65). Interviewee, Liz, compared what they do to 'a game', which reflects habitus and Bourdieu's metaphor of the game (Thompson, 2010) and how actors improvise strategically in order to 'maximise their positions' (Maton, 2012: 53).

One head referred to trying to prepare the pupils to respond in a way that will be considered good by inspectors when they ask questions about learning. This demonstrates the lengths that heads go to in order to secure a good Ofsted outcome:

I like the fact they [inspectors] talk to children. It's difficult sometimes as they [children] don't always have the language of learning and after the [mock] inspectors had been we did a big thing on "what am I learning?" and that's made a difference in some of the classes, not all of them yet...
"Why am I doing this? Why has my teacher asked me to do this?" [Fatiha]

Although the head explained that what she did was because of inspection, it may have had a positive impact on pupils' learning. I did not explore this during the interviews, but it is an issue worthy of further research.

Several interviewees commented on the fear of waiting to be inspected and how the shorter notice does not help. Schools are aware of roughly when they will be expected because the framework gives an indication of the interval between inspections (Ofsted, 2015e: 10-13). For example, schools judged to be good will be inspected within five years, and outstanding schools are exempt, as specified by the Education Act 2011 (DfE, 2011b, section 40). However, both categories of schools could be inspected if the school's results have fallen or if there are concerns about safeguarding or governance, for example, or simply as part of a survey or sample. Schools judged to require improvement will be inspected within two years. Headteachers know that the lead inspector will call the school at (or just after) 12 pm the day before the two-day inspection is due to take place. So they can anticipate calls on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. This 'waiting for the call' was commented on by interviewees:

I know two of them [heads]. One of them has had Ofsted now, but literally she would not do anything between 12 and 12.30 every day. She would seriously sit and wait and I would say you can't live like that. You just have to just get on with it. [Helen]

I think that too many schools live in fear actually [of Ofsted]. In fear, or in preparation. [Bindu]

Whatever our thoughts on Ofsted are, they do knock. They do ring. The phone rang at twenty past twelve today and I thought, "Ooh, it's Wednesday this could be..." [Carole]

Schools judged outstanding also live in anticipation of the Ofsted call and this can last a long time as in theory they are exempt, but as described in the Ofsted framework, they could be inspected at any time for various reasons (Ofsted, 2015e). One head described the pressure that this puts on the teachers:

It's just hard for teachers to sustain this level of workload I think. Especially I think when you have Ofsted looming and she [one of the teachers] is in her second year of teaching and she says her whole time at this school has been spent with the Ofsted, the fear of Ofsted or the notion that Ofsted is looming, hanging over her the whole time. It's hard ...especially [for] new teachers. [Pauline]

Pauline is suggesting that being Ofsted-ready puts an extra strain on her staff.

There has been much publicity recently about the possibility of no notice inspections. Ofsted undertook 35 no-notice inspections between September and October 2014 (Ofsted, 2014c) where there were concerns about: the curriculum; rapidly declining standards; safeguarding; a decline in pupils' behaviour; and standards of leadership or governance. None of the headteachers I interviewed had experienced a 'no-notice' inspection.

5.12 Consistency of inspections

Consistency, or lack of it, was a common theme emerging from the interviewees' responses, although this was not a question I specifically asked them. They raised it when describing their own experiences of being inspected and from discussions with their colleagues in other schools:

I think there are some inconsistencies, yes, I do, and also the teams. So other people talk of how "I had an amazing team". Other people say "I had a really awful team that just came in and from day one who didn't want to see anything good, they were just picking against you", and I haven't had that experience thankfully. [Helen]

So he didn't have his pet things he didn't go in and say "the learning intention wasn't on the board, that's a terrible lesson or inadequate".
[Sarah]

Even some Ofsted inspectors you know will have a different approach to early years than others. So we have to stand our ground and say “this is what we believe”. [Liz]

I don't know about whether this is appropriate or not, but the inconsistency of inspectors we found it within the inspection, let alone within different inspections. [Hugh]

The interviewee's reference to 'pet things' relates to a belief that inspectors have their own preferred approaches or pet likes, so this head was relieved that this was not the case on her inspection. One head (Liz) spoke about how inspectors can have very different expectations about what good practice in early years should look like and so schools need to 'stand their ground'. Interestingly, since early years provision has been graded separately (since September 2014), Ofsted's data (Figure 5.1) shows that early years is more likely to be judged good or outstanding than other aspects of the school (apart from behaviour and safety).

Bindu, who is also a trained inspector and has participated in a number of inspections, spoke about how she now sees inspection from the other side. She spoke about this:

I've learned so much, but it's also allowed me to see the loop holes, because every team has been so different. Never thought in a million years how differently people interpret things.

This head expressed surprise at the inconsistency that she observed when she was part of the inspection team. She said that much of the inconsistency related to interpretation of practice in the early years; a point raised by Liz above. Early years practice has changed considerably over the years as schools have had to respond to two new statutory frameworks in the past three years (DfE, 2012 and DfE, 2014). Ofsted inspectors have received training in how to inspect early years, but there is still much left to individual's interpretation of what constitutes good early years practice.

5.13 Impact on professionalism and autonomy

I asked the interviewees if they felt that having the Ofsted criteria for teaching adversely affected their professionalism and autonomy. Most responded with a qualified 'no':

No, because I do what suits myself [sic] and my school. They are good for a guide and good because that is what Ofsted is looking at and I don't want to be too far removed from what they are thinking because actually according to our criteria that is good. If I come in and feel something is outstanding and they come in and say "no it's good", we can't completely ignore them because at some point someone will come in and use those descriptors. So yes, I will put that A4 grid [Ofsted criteria] on the back of the sheet. [Helen]

I don't know whether it undermines our professionalism, but it does curtail some of the things we would naturally do ... Ofsted is such a big thing for headteachers because ultimately you're accountable... because you can't go back to the days where everyone just did what they liked, you know, it was all lovely, but there's so many things we have to show accountability for that have we lost sight of actually their children? [Ann]

No quite frankly, I would just do it anyway, even if it wasn't there and I would add a few more to it as well, so, no I don't. They are descriptors and if you are a good school, a strong school you'll use them, you'll adapt them, you'll put your own expectations which may even be higher than that outstanding bracket. [Bindu]

Though I wouldn't say it undermines, it makes, I think, teachers have to think more about how they can move learning forward. [Pauline]

It's a good question because you could let it feel like that, on the other hand you could stick with what you know is good and find ways of

interweaving that because not all of that is bad. It's so bland as well. How do you interpret what some of those comments [criteria] mean? You can't ignore it, because if you ignore it you are holding yourself hostage to fortune whenever Ofsted do come in, so you have to weave it in, but I think the key is that you need to hold on to your values and we have a very strong value base here. [Sarah].

No. I think that I agree in many ways with a lot that is there. [Hugh]

Only one headteacher gave an outright 'yes' to this question:

Yes, because we feel we have to meet what Ofsted is looking for, yet we have quite a strong idea of what we want teaching and learning to look and then we have to reflect back and think- is that going to be OK. ...I think we give teachers a lot less freedom than we would if we weren't tightly tied to Ofsted. [Liz]

The comments above suggest that the headteachers accept that Ofsted is an inevitable part of their lives and demonstrate an institutional habitus in an unconscious disposition that accepts the inevitability of the dominance of Ofsted. Bourdieu (1977: 80) describes how the 'homogeneity of habitus....causes practices and works...[to be] taken for granted'. Ofsted inspections have been part of these headteachers' whole teaching career in most cases. Some have been students at schools that were inspected. They are part of what Wilkins (2011) described as 'post-performative' teachers. The comments from the headteachers and deputies that I interviewed do not suggest that they are cynical and try to put on a show for the two days of an inspection. They want to do the best for their pupils all of the time, but realise how important the Ofsted outcome is, as Fatiha said: 'We are all anxious about our performance and about the school's reputation, if we don't get good. It's huge pressure'.

There were differences in the comments of the interviewees, depending partly on the 'status' of their schools in terms of their latest Ofsted judgment, but also to a

certain extent on their years of headship. Outwardly, the more experienced interviewees whose schools had been judged outstanding seemed more confident about being inspected and holding onto their own values. However, this could have been simply the image that they wanted to impress on me and the sample is too small to draw conclusions about this.

5.14 Summary

I was aware of my positionality and potential bias during the interviews and in the analysis of the transcripts. As Bourdieu said, in conversation with Wacquant (1989: 33-34), 'as soon as we observe the social world, we introduce in our perception of it a bias due to the fact that to study it, to describe it, to talk about it, we must retire from it more or less completely'. Several of the interviewees knew me and this may well have influenced their answers. However, all interviewees knew that I was an 'Ofsted inspector' and so this fact may have made all of them less inclined to be really honest. They would not want to portray themselves in a poor light (as they might consider that I would see it). It was evident that some interviewees were trying to impress in terms of describing their own practice in detail rather than answering the question specifically; I can understand this need. Possibly, those interviewees who did not know me found it easier to be open. Dunscombe (1998:117) states that research has shown that people's responses vary according to who is asking the questions, but adds that 'there is a limit to what can be done about this'. Despite this note of caution about the responses and hence my analysis, I feel that the interviewees' comments are still interesting and worth considering.

There was a commonality of response from the headteachers (and acting headteachers) that I interviewed, regardless of their teaching or headship experience or their school's latest Ofsted outcome. They came across as all trying to make the best of the inspection regime, whilst not necessarily agreeing with all of it. They see the need for the criteria as common benchmarks against which all schools can measure themselves. Some indicated that they would prefer a more

supportive inspection regime. Thompson (2009: 6) describes how headteachers' desire for autonomy and 'to be left alone' is part of their habitus (my term). He describes with reference to Bourdieu (Thompson, 2009) how headteachers are 'disposed, by virtue of the game they are in, to press for more authority and that this has been a relative constant in the field'. He explains that this desire for autonomy is a constant for headteachers across countries and not just linked to the accountability regime, including Ofsted, in England. I would describe this as the headteachers' institutional habitus. I believe that the headteachers are desperately trying to understand the rules of the Ofsted 'game' so that they can gain symbolic capital for their schools in the form of a 'good' Ofsted outcome. The problem for the headteachers is that the rules, i.e. the criteria, keep changing and are open to interpretation so are difficult to follow. Senior HMI in Ofsted are possibly insufficiently aware of headteachers' need to be 'Ofsted-ready'. This seems to me to illustrate what Bourdieu calls 'misrecognition', (Swartz, 1997: 43), which I referred to in the previous chapter (4.10), in relation to the HMI that I interviewed for this research. Those within Ofsted, at the top of the 'inspection field' hierarchy do not (perhaps cannot) appreciate how those lower down feel about being inspected.

Performativity is very much in evidence as schools increasingly attempt to prepare for an inspection. The outcome of an inspection has huge ramifications for schools, not least in terms of retaining pupils, but also with the threat of being forced to become an academy. The Coalition Government's policy was to force schools judged to be inadequate to become sponsored academies, but this has been extended to schools that 'require improvement' and are 'coasting' (Watt, 2015). A Conservative majority government was elected in May 2015 and has confirmed this decision in the Education and Adoption Bill (DfE, 2015c) going through Parliament. Of course this announcement came after my interviews with headteachers, but they were aware even a year ago of the possibility of being forced to become an academy if their school was not performing well.

The interviewees have established monitoring regimes in their own schools that are rigorous and regular and draw on Ofsted's criteria and 'beyond' as one

headteacher put it. Their monitoring is for performance management purposes, but also so that they are prepared for Ofsted, which is part of their performativity and fabrication (Ball, 2003). The way that headteachers manage and improve the quality of teaching in their schools is part of the Ofsted criteria for leadership and management (for example, Ofsted, 2015a: 41).

The interviewees described some of the changes to the teaching criteria over the years, particularly the increased focus on pupils' progress and on groups of pupils (such as those eligible for the pupil premium). They were positive about the new emphasis on 'teaching over time' and the fact that inspectors look at a wider range of evidence than just the teaching performance. Despite this, they criticised the language of the teaching criteria, its vagueness and how it is very open to interpretation.

The inconsistency of inspection teams was a real concern to the interviewees, although some of what they said was based on what they had heard from other headteachers. They were mostly complimentary about the way that their own most recent inspection had been undertaken. They also welcomed their greater involvement in the process, but some want this to go further. They nearly all commented on what they see as the strong link between performance data and the quality of teaching. The pupils' results in end of key stage tests are looked at by inspectors and help to determine the achievement judgement. Since teaching is also judged in terms of its impact on pupils' progress (and therefore achievement), there is likely to be a close link between these two Ofsted grades. Data on the outcomes of 100 recent Ofsted inspection reports on primary schools (Watchsted, 2015) suggests that schools are generally given the same grade for teaching and achievement. Some interviewees believe that lead inspectors have made their decision about the overall effectiveness judgement before setting foot in the school.

Since the interviews, a new inspection framework in September 2014 (Ofsted, 2014a) removed the expectation that inspectors grade teaching in lesson

observations. In language that is both direct and, in my view, aggressive, lead inspectors have been told not to write about teaching as if it might give the impression that Ofsted has a preferred teaching style. In a desire to be fairer to schools, Ofsted has come down very firmly on inspectors, especially those who write the reports (lead inspectors). The way that lead inspectors are treated can be described, in Bourdieuan terms, as symbolic violence. They have been inundated with weekly guidance about what not to include in the reports, with words like 'independent' being on the banned list (SERCO, 2015). It is clear from the constant reminders from Ofsted that some lead inspectors are finding this difficult to come to terms with, perhaps like the headteachers, after years of working one way it is not easy to change.

Ofsted's criteria and approach to inspecting the quality of teaching changed little over the years until the appointment of HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw in 2012. In the earliest frameworks, there was a clear list of what inspectors should expect to see in lessons. The 2005 Ofsted inspection framework, following the Education Act, 2005 (DfES, 2005) introduced several changes: four rather than seven grades²⁷; shorter notice; less time in school; fewer inspectors and a focus on validating the school's own self-evaluation (Ofsted, 2005). There was a reduction in the number of lessons seen until a new framework in 2009. Until 2009, there was a very clear emphasis on the lesson as the vehicle for evaluating the quality of teaching. However, even after 2009, Ofsted's annual reports included detail about the quality of teaching that referred to lessons. For example, in the 2010- 2011 Ofsted annual report (Ofsted, 2011b), there are detailed references to features of outstanding teaching, from which it can be inferred lessons, which may explain where the Ofsted 'myths' arise. For example, it says about outstanding teaching:

...there is a creative and appropriate balance between teacher-directed learning, which sets the framework in which the learning takes place, and independent learning, which allows pupils to explore questions and solve

²⁷ From 1996 until 2005: 1= excellent, 2= very good, 3= good, 4= satisfactory, 5= unsatisfactory, 6= poor, 7= very poor. From 2005: 1= outstanding, 2= good, 3= satisfactory, 4= inadequate.

problems in more depth where appropriate, there are good opportunities for pupils to make choices, ask questions, find answers, collaborate, listen, discuss, and debate and present their work to their peers so that others can comment.

Effective assessment within lessons enables pupils to demonstrate their understanding and ensures that teachers can adapt their teaching 'in real time' to the needs of the pupils. (Ofsted, 2011b: 51-52)

These statements may have encouraged schools to prepare Ofsted-ready lessons in which they attempt to demonstrate some of the features described above when they are observed, but which now Ofsted refers to as myths (Ofsted, 2012c). The annual report (Ofsted, 2011b: 52) also states that where teaching is 'no better than satisfactory, lessons and learning are not well-paced, with time lost on unproductive activities such as copying out the objectives for the lesson, completing exercises without sufficient reason, or simply spending too long on one activity'. Such comments would not be acceptable in the 2014 framework since HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw has dictated that inspection reports should not suggest that Ofsted has a preferred teaching style (Ofsted, 2014a; Wilshaw, 2014).

The interviewees had relatively little to say about the impact of educational research on the teaching criteria, which is perhaps a reflection of their limited knowledge of educational (academic) research as much as how they perceive it to have influenced Ofsted. They had more comments on the impact of politics, believing that although Ofsted is supposed to be independent of government, in reality it is not. However, their views were again mainly related to the framework for inspections and the appointment of key personnel such as HMCI rather than the details of the criteria. They did cite the 'pupil premium' group (DfE, 2013b) as being politically motivated.

Most of the interviewees did not consider that their professionalism and autonomy were undermined by having Ofsted criteria, although this may have reflected their general acceptance of the status quo and their institutional habitus or what

Courtney (2014) refers to as post-panopticism. They illustrated Bourdieu's idea of 'playing the game' (Cole and Gunter, 1990: 140) in the way they described attempting to interpret the rules – the criteria in all their many guises. The interviewees explained how they aim to keep ahead of Ofsted developments and the latest foci of inspection, what Courtney (2014: 9) describes as 'fuzzy norms', in order to be able to present their schools in the best light. The field of inspection does not have clear boundaries and headteachers are concerned about their vulnerability because of the inconsistency of inspection teams, from discussions with other headteachers as well as from their own experience. They mainly welcome the changes introduced by HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw, such as looking at teaching over time, rather than the lesson performance, and not grading teaching in lessons. However, this has led to possibly greater uncertainty about what inspectors are looking for and an even greater reliance on pupils' performance data. It still raises the question for schools as to why inspectors observe lessons at all (Ofsted, 2014f). This is unlikely to change as the handbook for September 2015 (Ofsted, 2015k) suggests that lesson observations will be retained, albeit without being graded. This handbook also includes a greater focus on pupils' learning, less on historical performance data and more on the progress of pupils currently in the school (Ofsted, 2015k). These changes go some way to responding to some recent criticisms (For example, Waldegrave and Simons, 2014 and Peal, 2014), but not in terms of lesson observations.

Chapter 6 Analysis of interviews with teachers

6.1 Introduction and background of the interviewees and their schools

The teachers had a wide range of teaching experience from a newly qualified teacher (NQT) to a teacher with 26 years of experience. Apart from the NQT, they all had some form of subject or aspect (such as SEN) responsibility. As the table 6.1 below shows, nearly half of them had only taught in their current school:

	Teachers interviewed														
No of years teaching	8	10	1	4	3	4	25	1	NQT	1	11	13	9	12	18
All In current school	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					16 yrs
															6
															26
														✓	1
															9

Table 6.1 Teaching experience of the interviewees

In addition to the range of teaching experience, the teachers had also come into teaching through a variety of different routes. Most had qualified with a post graduate qualification in education or a four-years degree in education. A few had come through the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) route. Some of the interviewees had been teaching assistants prior to becoming teachers. There have been a number of research reports into the impact of different routes into teaching, in the UK and USA (for example, Kennedy et al, 1991; Constantine et al, 2009; Priyadharshini and Robinson-Pant, 2003; Sass, 2011). Troman (2008) noted differences in primary teachers' response to the current performative school culture, based on their years' experience and whether they had had another career prior to becoming teachers. I have not attempted to explore how these factors, such as the different routes into teaching or the amount of teaching experience, might have affected teachers' answers; this could be another research project.

The contexts of the interviewees' schools are summarised in Table 3.1. Most of these teachers' experience had been in schools in London, often with high proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals. They had nearly all experienced Ofsted inspections or 'mock Ofsted' inspections by the local authority. At least two of the interviewees were union representatives. Some of the teachers spoke about the context of their schools, for example:

We are in a very tricky area and for a lot of our children the only kind of stable positive role model they have and that doesn't seem to be recognised, because we are having to nurture not just being teacher. We're having to handle so many aspects. [Susie]

I'm just thinking a lot of the children that may have difficult home circumstances, behaviour elements, the fact that we may have children with lots of quite extreme needs and just how all of that is catered [for]... and [it is] of course that school's responsibility to make sure that they are catered for and that they arrive with the right support and different stuff as well..[Wilma]

Susie and Wilma (from different schools) were not complaining about the challenges but commenting that this does not seem to be taken into consideration by Ofsted. Susie's colleague Paula added how difficult it is to make sure that every child makes good progress when 'it doesn't take into account the fact that the child's come in that day and had no sleep that night'.

There has been a great deal of research into the relative under-achievement of less advantaged pupils, as measured by free school meal eligibility (for example, Sammons et al, 2015; Carter and Whitfield, 2012; Connolly et al, 2014; HOC, 2014a; Ofsted, 2011b; 2013b). Lupton (2006: 5) notes that schools serving disadvantaged cohorts 'score less well in official inspections and are more likely to be diagnosed as failing and put into special measures or closed'. I have referred to this in Chapter 5.2 and included data that seems to support the claim that it is harder to get a good Ofsted outcome in a disadvantaged area.

Bourdieu (1984: 6) defines habitus as 'systems of dispositions that are characteristic of different classes'. Habitus is linked to field and therefore actors adopt different habituses according to the field. In this research I have referred to the 'field of inspection'. A teacher will have a personal or familial habitus (Smyth and Banks, 2012: 264) associated with life outside of school and an institutional habitus in school, defined by Smyth and Banks (2014: 265) as 'the impact of a social group on an individual's behaviour as it is mediated through organisations such as schools'. In addition, teachers could be said to have a collective habitus in the field of inspection in view of their acquired disposition. Lupton and Thrupp (2013) refer to the different 'institutional habituses' of schools in different settings and how teachers respond to the challenges. In my interviews with teachers it became evident that many of their responses reflected their school cultures. It came across that even when the schools served similar school contexts (in terms of deprivation, for example) they had different identities as described by Lupton and Thrupp (2013). In addition, Braun et al (2011: 586) describe the different ways that schools enact policies, as they produce 'to some extent, their own 'take' on a policy, drawing on aspects of their culture or ethos'. In this case, the 'policy' is the Ofsted framework; another 'policy' is performance management (which is discussed later in this section).

The teachers spoke with evident pride about the current practice in their schools and were supportive of their headteachers and other senior leaders. Of course, this could have been put on for my benefit if they felt that I was going to relay messages to their headteachers, although I had assured them that I would not. I did not explore the different school cultures as that was beyond the scope of this research. I also considered that there was enough commonality across the schools to be able to justify a 'teachers' institutional habitus' in the field of inspection, reflected in their views and response to inspection and performativity.

It was not my intention to try to infer links between the teachers' responses and the length of their teaching experience as the sample is so small, but I have referred to it in the analysis that follows where it is relevant.

6.2 Views on their most recent Ofsted inspection

Teachers were asked about their most recent Ofsted inspection experience. Those who had been inspected in 2012 or 2013, which was generally their most recent inspection, recalled the experience well; for example, Alicia said:

In my last Ofsted inspection [in 2012] I felt the whole process quite good. I was dreading it and for me personally it was a very positive one, but I remember I thought I had to stay with the timetable and so the time that the gentleman was going to observe me it was very early in the year so it was kind of an introduction to a class really. I think it was a first step and so I did some circle time and we talked about new beginnings and it went really well and he stayed about 40 minutes and then left and I thought that was it and at lunchtime he said I need to come and see you do science because I need to see one of three core subjects. So then I had to re-gear myself up and it was fine, but it was almost that for me was saying what you did was a great lesson, but it wasn't that important because it wasn't the core subject and I wanted to see core subjects.

Alicia is describing how she was surprised when an inspector came to see her twice in one day in order to see her teach one of the core subjects. The inspector appears to have spent a long time – 40 minutes – in her lesson. She recalls the experience as positive because it went well and she received positive feedback about her lessons (McCrone et al, 2009). The feedback she received seems to have been very important to her, which may reflect how she perceived the status and symbolic capital of the inspector who gave the feedback. The Sutton Trust guide for schools on teacher evaluation and appraisal (Murphy, 2013: 6) emphasised the importance of feedback: 'Good feedback is at the heart of

successful evaluation, if it is to lead to improved teaching.’ The word ‘good’ is subjective and needs further explanation. Inspectors are expected to offer feedback to teachers but have very little time during an inspection (a few minutes only) to carry this out in the detail that is really necessary, based on my own experience. It is less clear if the teachers would feel so happy if the feedback had been less positive. Yasmine described what happened when she was observed:

They observed me in numeracy the first time [in 2012]. Literacy is my strongest subject and I got satisfactory [in numeracy], so that was quite stressful because obviously the school was going for good. I started to panic about letting people down and then... Yeah, but they came back the next day and then I got a good on the second one, so that was a relief. It was quite a stressful time. I felt very tired because I was worrying about my lesson the next day, and I’d only just been teaching [at this school for a short while]. I wasn’t really that clear on what they were looking for.

Yasmine’s heartfelt comment about not wanting to let down her colleagues illustrates the importance of the Ofsted outcome for the school. She also mentions the stress and the sense of panic, which may well have adversely affected her lesson the following day. Perryman (2007) describes the impact of the inspection regime on secondary teachers in a school in special measures, and suggests that stress is not always negative except when it leads to negative emotions. Presumably, when a teacher receives encouraging feedback from an inspector this dispels to a certain extent the negative emotions. Dolan et al’s (2012) analysis of behavioural psychology indicates that teachers are more likely to respond to information which reinforces a positive self-image. Yasmine also concludes by saying that she did not ‘know what they were looking for’. This is an important point which I return to later in the chapter.

Two teachers from another school spoke positively about their inspection experience:

Obviously we were Ofsteded [sic] last year and so we all went through that, tough ...Actually the inspector who was in my class was nice. He was really nice. He came in and he was with a member of SLT [senior leadership team] so that made it better and then when he spoke to me and gave me feedback he was really positive. Yes, he was really nice. I mean they spoke to us before and they all seemed like nice people. I'm sure they are they just have a very hard job. [Rawinda]

Yes, well mine, she was well, she didn't really have any emotion on her face the whole time and I remember thinking 'well nothing drastically went wrong'. I thought it was good and she came back and was... much sort of calm and nice, "keep it up you're doing a really good job" and that's the main thing to make me feel much better, but I don't want to go through it again for a long while. [Caroline]

One of the first things the lead inspector said to us when we all first met as a staff on the first day before it all began was, I'm paraphrasing– "we are here to see you teaching, there is no right or wrong way to do it"– and that was quite a reassuring thing to say, now whether that is contradictory to the criteria, I'm not sure, I think its broad enough for criteria statements to allow you to act freely and in what in your own opinion you think is in the best interests of the class and I wouldn't want to see that change.[Simon]

These teachers' mainly positive comments contrast with the findings of many other researchers (for example, Jeffrey and Woods, 1996; Woods and Jeffrey, 1998; Case et al, 2000; Perryman, 2007; NUT, 2014). The different responses in my research may be due to changes to the inspection framework, whether the teachers' school was judged to be failing and, possibly, schools and teachers simply becoming more accustomed to inspection and 'post-performative' (Wilkins, 2011). Of course, the teachers may have given a more positive spin for my benefit, 'performing' for me (Perryman, 2007).

Rawinda, Caroline and Simon's comments above suggest the importance of human interaction and the way that inspectors conduct themselves. Inspectors are taught during their training about the importance of trying to minimise stress and the need to smile (Ofsted, 2015e). It is clear from the comments above that this made a difference to the way they were perceived by teachers. Other interviewees spoke about the emotional journey and how the experience was better than the anticipation of it, as Dave said, 'Definitely the thought of it was worse than the actual event'. Alicia spoke about the emotions of her colleagues:

They are scared now. I think scared is not too strong a word to use, they know that it's only one badly chosen lesson away from being categorised as needs improvement and I think it puts a... I personally know a lot of teachers who are under undue pressure,... because I guess it's a snapshot of a lesson and we all do on a daily basis. We all do outstanding lessons and we all probably do lessons that are good. Sometimes we do lessons that are not adequate. [Alicia]

Alicia's concern is about the weight she feels that inspectors give to the observation of a lesson, which, as she says, can go well or badly. The move to inspectors judging teaching over time (rather than on the basis of snapshot observations) is discussed later.

The encouraging feedback that Caroline received from the inspector was also important to her. The Policy Exchange, in its critique of Ofsted (Waldegrave and Simons, 2014:17) stated that 'Lesson observations are perhaps the most symbolic and well recognised element of school inspections for most schools, particularly classroom teachers. They also take a significant proportion of time for a typical inspection.' Lesson observation is also probably the most controversial part of an inspection and has been discussed and criticised throughout Ofsted's lifetime, but particularly in the last three years since the appointment of Sir Michael Wilshaw in 2012 as HMCI and the Coalition government (see for example, Peal, 2014; Waldegrave and Simons, 2014). Section 2.4 describes the changes to the criteria over the years and how teaching has assumed greater significance since 2012

when it became one of only four areas reported on. The Sutton Trust guidance on teacher evaluation (Murphy, 2013) says that 'Even when conducted by well-trained independent evaluators, classroom observations are the least predictive method of assessing teacher effectiveness'. Their measurement of teacher effectiveness is based on value-added data on students' progress averaged over three years, drawing from Kayne et al (2014). Murphy (2013:16) admits that this method of measuring teacher effectiveness is not perfect, but concludes that it is much more reliable than classroom observation. However, he adds that observation has advantages, but 'the observer must be properly prepared. This means they should have good training so that they know what to look for, can provide effective feedback and keep subjective opinions to a minimum'. Inspectors' observations of lessons are not intended to measure teacher effectiveness, but simply to give a view of the features of the quality of teaching (Ofsted, 2015a; 2015k). Inspectors receive training in observation and feedback and are coached and assessed during live inspections as part of this training. However, there is still probably always going to be an element of subjectivity because as headteacher Fatiha said 'they are only human'.

The teachers whose school went from being outstanding to 'requires improvement' recalled how difficult that was, and suggested that the school was not prepared for the changed Ofsted focus away from teaching as a performance and onto the pupils:

We had a very sort of rude awakening when they did come and observe our lessons because teachers that were used to being good every day of the week, [or] outstanding were coming out as requires improvement borderline, you know, fails. And so I've noticed a huge shift just in this year through our observations that we been having with our SLT [senior leadership team]. It's all about children now which I don't necessarily think is a bad thing because really that is what it should be down to, whereas before it was very much a performance of you. It's not a performance of you anymore. [Susie]

Susie's comment above which was less than a year after the inspection suggests an acceptance of the outcome and awareness of the changing inspection emphasis. Another teacher's school went from outstanding to good, which can be very demoralising because of the loss of kudos that the outstanding judgement brings with it and the potential to become a teaching school (NCTL, 2014) as well as being exempt from inspection²⁸. Rawinda said, 'I think because we went from outstanding to good as well, that was hard.' Her colleague Caroline added: 'But at the end of the day I'm pleased that we are good.' Rawinda agreed and said, 'it's really hard to even get a good'. These teachers recognise that it is more difficult now for a school to get an outstanding judgement (see also Chapter 5). This issue is considered in the next section.

6.3 Changes to the teaching criteria over the years

6.3.1 Ofsted raising the bar?

There were some common themes emerging from teachers' response to the question about changes to the criteria. Some of the teachers had not experienced many Ofsted frameworks as they had only been teaching for a year or less, whereas others had been through a large number of inspections, even in the same school, so could draw on these to compare the criteria, or their perceptions of the criteria. Several spoke about how it is more difficult to get good or outstanding now:

I think it's got steadily harder to get 'good' over the years. [Kylie]

I think the expectations are a lot higher and I get the feeling when I started that what we now call a good school would have been before bordering on an outstanding school, is the way I've taken it. But now an outstanding is something that was not seen, not seen before, but it's harder. [Kathy]

²⁸ Outstanding schools are exempt from inspection according to the Education Act 2011 (DfE, 2011c) and Regulations (DfE, 2012c), although HMCI has powers to inspect at any time under section 8 following risk assessment or concerns about pupils' safety or as part of a survey (Ofsted, 2015e: 8).

The goal posts keep changing I think. [Charlotte]

It was the same with the criteria, what was good, you know, is not good enough now, but outstanding is becoming good. [Caroline]

So I think before from what would be judged as a good, what you now score a good lesson, now just wouldn't be judged as that and what before would be outstanding, would now just be good and I think only good is good enough. [Martha]

I think it's a lot higher expectations. It's harder to get a good or to get an outstanding as it had been before, but I think it's just raising the standards. [Rawinda]

Comments from these teachers all indicate their shared perception that it is harder now to get a good judgement for their teaching. This point was also raised by several of the headteachers and I considered whether it was an accurate perception in Chapter 5. Sir Michael Wishaw has made no secret of trying to raise standards and proclaimed in his first Annual Report (Ofsted, 2012e: 20), 'We have raised the bar higher'; though he was referring to the change from satisfactory to requires improvement. Wilshaw also went on to add, 'New inspection frameworks have continued to raise the bar. As a consequence, there is little doubt that a very high proportion of today's schools, if judged on earlier frameworks, would be good or better' (Ofsted, 2012e: 7). It is not clear that the criteria have been made more demanding (See section 5.). Several interviewees referred to the new 'RI' grade, which was unpopular:

Yeah I thinkas far as teachers are concerned, the main thing is the difference between what was satisfactory is now needs improvement. So I think that's probably the major change that's kind of in teachers' minds if you like. [Alicia]

I think only good is good enough. That's a tough thing now, there's no satisfactory, it's obviously requires improvement. So that you get your good

or your outstanding or it's not good enough. This is awful wording. I mean satisfactory was bad enough, but... [Rawinda]

To know that you're not even satisfactory is even worse. It's quite a big drop, quite a big gap I think between that to be good and requires improvement. [Caroline]

I think we were talking about one of things about the whole change from satisfactory. That was quite a while ago, kind of shift from the difference, what's satisfactory and how people looked at that to requiring improvement. [Wilma]

The teachers dislike the phrase 'requires improvement' and believe that there is a big difference between that and being 'good'. The Ofsted teaching criteria no longer spell out what 'requires improvement' will look like, which they do for the other grades outstanding, good and inadequate. This change occurred in the September 2012 Ofsted inspection handbook (Ofsted, 2012b: 35). The description for requires improvement is: 'Teaching requires improvement as it is not good'. In order to decide on this judgement, inspectors have to look at the descriptions for good and inadequate; if it does not fit either description, the teaching judgement must be 'requires improvement'. The changes to the rules of the game in the field of inspection increase the stress that teachers feel and emphasise the symbolic violence that Ofsted unwittingly exerts.

6.3.2 Focus on pupils

Several teachers recognised that inspectors focus more on pupils now when observing their lessons and less on their performance as teachers:

Exactly, I'd echo what Bola has said. It does seem to be a bit more focused on the learning, rather than the teaching. [Dave]

When I first came into teaching, it's like what is the teacher doing, and now the emphasis is on what are the pupils doing? What are the pupils doing

and what are they engaging in and how is this actually progressing them, which I think is better in a way because the focus has changed. But I think that there is also a lot of confusion because of the amount of changes, like what's required from us, what's required from our support staff. [Parva]

Parva says that she feels that focusing on the pupils is a better way to judge teaching, but still expresses uncertainty about what inspectors are looking for, a point that was made by Yasmine earlier. This reflects either a lack of familiarity with the Ofsted criteria or difficulty in interpreting them, or most likely a combination of both. However, Susie describes how, although she knows that inspectors will be focusing on the pupils, her concern is that they do not know the pupils:

But the sort of mad thing about it is that it's about the children, but when they come in and judge they don't take anything into account about those children. So they come in and they say they want to see progress in twenty minutes. [Susie]

Charlotte made a similar point about knowing the children:

I say it's a good thing obviously, progress, it is what we're here for. We are here to progress the children. But I don't always think that people outside the classroom, they don't know the children and what worries me as a teacher, it's becoming more data-driven and number-based and it's less about the individuals and their whole life stories and to me teaching is about life stories and little people, well in my case little people.

Susie's and Charlotte's point, echoed by a few other teachers, that inspectors cannot possibly know how well individual pupils are learning and progressing in the short time they spend in lessons, is both valid and reasonable (Waldegrave and Simons, 2014). Inspectors are now expected to look beyond what they see in the 20 minutes to other evidence such as work in books, talking to pupils and information about pupils' progress, in order to judge teaching over time (Ofsted,

2014a; 2014d; 2014f), inspectors have attended compulsory training about this. The focus is increasingly on pupils' progress over time, which determines the achievement grade. The link between the achievement and teaching judgements was discussed in Chapter 5. Although Ofsted has attempted to explain why inspectors still observe lessons (Ofsted 2014d), given that there is no longer a teaching grade from individual observations, it is difficult to justify the need to spend so much time observing lessons. This perceived need to continue observing lessons could simply be a hangover from past practice or self-indulgence, as observing lessons is in my experience, apart from talking to pupils, the most pleasant and interesting part of the inspection itself.

As Ofsted itself debated the way it intended to inspect schools from September 2015, a number of critics have recommended changes to classroom observations (Waldegrave and Simons, 2014: 53; Bassey, 2015). The unions have been very vociferous recent critics of Ofsted and inspections (for example, Boustead, 2014; Hobby, 2015). Avison et al (2008) suggested that there should be more rather than less observations and was complimentary about the approach adopted prior to Ofsted by HMI. Their comments came at a time when the number of lesson observations had been reduced dramatically (Ofsted 2005b). Since 2009, there has been an increased focus on classroom observations.

The other point that Susie made was her view that inspectors expect to see progress in 20 minutes. This is one of the Ofsted myths, discussed in Chapter 5, but is of concern to teachers:

That's what's stopping me from getting that outstanding was the progress on the children, from all the children, it had to be all of them, not just a group so that's what I found most difficult in sort of moving me up to the next level. [Rawinda]

Rawinda is referring to inspectors' expectation that all pupils will make good or outstanding progress. The grade descriptors for outstanding teaching in 2012 and

in January 2015 (see appendix 5) referred to 'almost all' pupils rather than 'all', and specify certain groups. In the 2014 handbook, the term 'disadvantaged' was used instead of 'pupils eligible for the pupil premium', which is long-winded. There is the addition of 'most able' in the 2014 handbook, which was an Ofsted concern at that time; see Ofsted publications (Ofsted, 2013c; 2015h), which are mainly about secondary-age students, but have implications for primary schools as well.

6.3.3 What inspectors look for

There was a mixture of views about whether inspectors expect to see progress in every observation, however short, and even disagreement within one school:

Just thinking about when you are observed, they [inspectors] want to see that at the end of the lesson they know something or are better at something. I think that's the main thing they look for. [Yasmine]

I read recently that they don't. [laughs]. That's a head teacher thing. The progress within the lesson for every child and all of that. It's over time for Ofsted -that's what I read recently. [Kylie]

So the data highlights that even within the same school the teachers are not clear how inspectors judge teaching. Some interviewees spoke about how they appreciated the differences in what inspectors look for compared to the era when the National Strategies (See DfE, 2011d) were a focus. For example, Amrit and Simon said:

Well definitely the three-part lesson, they're not looking for any longer, so that's something that I've noticed, especially during my GTP year, that's what they required then, three-part lesson, that's always what I've been doing and then from the changes it's obviously come about that's not what they're looking for. They're looking for more flexibility and giving the teacher more ownership. [Amrit]

Yes, I think again that in the times of the early 2000s pretty much every school, primary school that is, was adhering to the literacy and numeracy changes at that time and observations were very much keyed into the dictats of that process in that lessons were perceived to be a certain length, in certain sections of a certain duration and you were certainly in feedback, timings and issues relating to the strategies would be mentioned as part of the feedback and that is something that in my opinion is fortunate to have fallen by the wayside. [Simon]

Simon and Amrit seem pleased at not having to adhere to the strict expectations of the Strategies, which were, as they have implied, commented upon during Ofsted inspections (see Ofsted, 2002a; 2002b; Webb and Vulliamy, 2007). In reality, the strategies were never mandatory, but not all schools and inspectors seemed to be aware of this. Schools (and inspectors) may have been justified in believing that the strategies were mandatory because of the manner in which the documents were presented and the national programmes of training and support (DfE, 2011d). The 2000 Ofsted handbook (Ofsted, 2000a: 46) instructed inspectors to 'evaluate how well literacy and numeracy are taught'. Webb and Vulliamy's (2007: 561) review of the strategies concluded that they had been very influential in affecting primary teachers' pedagogy. Other reports were similarly positive (Fisher et al, 2000; Ofsted, 2002a; 2002b), although this view was not universal (for example, Alexander, 2004; Brehony, 2005). Paula spoke about this as well:

I think the grading has changed hugely and the focus of what they're looking for when they come in. From my experience when Ofsted first started it was purely about the teacher in front of the room. Ofsted inspector sitting there with the stopwatch timing how much time the teacher talked for, how much the children spoke. It was very much nitty gritty of exactly what that teacher was doing and it was about teaching and learning whereas now it's more about the learning that the teacher makes.

Paula's reference to the stopwatch alludes to the Strategies' guidance on timing for the different parts of a lesson. At one time, shortly after the introduction of the Strategies, inspectors are reported to have sat in lessons with stopwatches to ensure that teachers spent the right amount of time on each part of the recommended three-part lesson; this may be apocryphal as it was never an Ofsted expectation but illustrates issues around the way that Ofsted communicates its expectations to schools.

I definitely trust that the whole thing about not just a 20-minute slot but the whole progress over- time is much more positive. [Wilma]

Wilma recognised the more recent focus on pupils' learning, and drawing from a wider range of evidence. She suggests that looking at teaching over time is a more positive and fairer way of judging teaching. This view echoes that of their headteachers (see Section 5.5.5).

6.4 Perceived political influences

The teachers could not always identify political influences on the criteria though, as was the case with their headteachers, they recognised the impact on the inspection framework, such as less notice given to schools for an impending inspection and less time spent by inspectors in school:

I think there is a growing move to simplicity as well to simplify the process. If I'm honest that's a political accompaniment, probably a political leaning, but the fact that it's been simplified, reduced and scaled down to two days will obviously impact on what Ofsted is looking for which has been a lot more focused. I'm not suggesting that it's for the better, but it is quite rewarding for schools to be told for example that their pastoral care is really good and things like that have gone by the wayside, but you know you can only fit so much into a given amount of time. [Simon]

Simon's balanced response suggests that he believes that the government has been instrumental in reducing the amount of time inspectors spend in school to two days (from up to five previously). At the same time, he bemoans the loss of the focus on pastoral care. During the years when the Labour Government was in power, 1997 to 2010, there was a greater focus on a wider range of issues (HOC, 2003; Ball, 2008; Ofsted, 2009a). In addition to inspecting achievement, behaviour, teaching and leadership, as now, inspectors had to report on all of the *Every Child Matters* areas (see page 58). Following the election of the Coalition Government in May 2010 and the appointment of the Sir Michael Wilshaw as HMCI in January 2012, a new Ofsted inspection framework reduced the number of areas graded and reported on to four: achievement; behaviour and safety; quality of teaching and leadership and management (Ofsted, 2012a). There was less focus on the welfare and personal development of pupils, with more on teaching, achievement and leadership and management (Courtney, 2014). Safeguarding is still very important and there is separate guidance for inspectors on this (for example, Ofsted, 2014i; 2015i).

A few of the teachers referred to the introduction of performance-related pay as a government initiative. Although this is not directly related to the Ofsted criteria, headteachers often use the criteria when observing lessons and grading teachers. Norma said: 'the grades [from lesson observations²⁹] can be tied into performance related pay as well'. They were also understandably concerned about the introduction of the new National Curriculum, which began in September 2014, two terms after the interviews took place.

Yes, I'm thinking of the new curriculum quite possibly. It's like crystal ball gazing, reading into what might be further down the line, who knows what's going to come...free schools, academies. [Dave]

The reference to free schools and academies reflects a fear expressed by some teachers about the government's academisation policy (DfE, 2011b). None of the

²⁹ Inspectors and schools are told that Ofsted inspection observations must not to be used for performance management purposes. (Ofsted, 2015a: 15)

teachers' schools were academies at the time of the interviews (one has since converted), but they were all aware of the possibility of being forced to become an academy if their school was judged by Ofsted to be inadequate or, under the latest government's initiative, 'coasting' (DfE, 2015b, and HOC, 2015c). As Kylie said:

Suddenly we've got requires improvement or good and no satisfactory anymore, so you are either good or you basically failed and then you can be made into an academy.

Almost immediately after the result of the 2015 UK General Election, the new Conservative Government prepared the Education and Adoption Bill (DfE, 2015b; 2015c) which sets out how a wider range of schools, those said to be 'coasting', will be forced to become academies.

Teachers suggested that the focus in Ofsted criteria on 'pupil premium' pupils was an example of the government's influence:

I think the strong input on like the pupil premium children, making sure that all children, which obviously has always been there... [Wilma]

Pupil premium and things like that. Vulnerable children. I think Ofsted's focus on the lowest twenty percent and vulnerable children, pupil premium children is actually really good because it gives SENCOs some backing. Not that good headteachers would need backing, but it makes all the schools have to look at SEN. [Kylie]

Kylie and Wilma correctly suggest that the new focus on pupil premium is an example of political influence. Pupil premium funding was introduced by the Coalition Government in 2011 (DfE, 2010b) for each eligible pupil, and the term was then used by Ofsted. However, Ofsted guidance had included reference to pupils eligible for free school meals since 2009 (Ofsted, 2009a:10). Earlier frameworks referred to groups of pupils, but did not always define what these were. Free school meals have been available for eligible pupils since 1980 (DES, 1980).

Bernard raised a point that was echoed by a few other teachers, that the government's concern is about raising standards because of the relatively poor performance of England in international test like PISA:

You see in the news that our education system is sort of lagging behind some others, but it's a lot better than a lot of others. You talk to the layman in the street and they get the conception that the teaching in England isn't very good because we are lagging behind countries that they might see, like Iceland and the Scandinavian countries and some of the South East Asian countries. Why isn't our education as good as theirs? [Bernard]

Okay, I don't know particularly that much about it, but I think the main thing is that the government are big on raising standards in reading, writing and maths and that as a country they are falling like further down the league tables. So whether that's had kind of an influence on inspectors looking at a lot more data and looking at what the children are learning. [Bola]

I think we all feel like the Government keeps raising the bar all the time for their own agenda. [Kylie]

Some teachers considered that government policies influence Ofsted practice:

Expectation, I think to be perfectly honest, particularly with the current government there has been a shift in education and I think that Ofsted is to a certain extent reflecting that in that it's all characterised isn't it like a move back to Victorian, like rote learning, all of that stuff which is ridiculous, there's no such thing in modern day classroom. [Parva]

I think because it all comes from above. Any policy is going to influence the criteria, what we can do, what Ofsted is going to mark us, assess us on. [Caroline]

I don't know, because Ofsted is supposed to be separate from the Government isn't it, but there was talk not long ago about where they are

trying to make it difficult so that they could fail schools and make them become academies.... [Kylie]

These teachers raise interesting points about the government's focus on raising standards, because the country is not doing as well as others in international tests. They also mention the Coalition Government's policies on education that seemed to propose a return to earlier ideas of good classroom practice, which Ball (2011) compared to a return to the Victorian era, in terms of Michael Gove's ideas for the curriculum, for example, 'learning the capitals of obscure countries and memorising list of English kings and queens and the periodic table'. The Coalition Government introduced a spelling, grammar and punctuation test for Year 6 pupils in 2013 (DfE, 2012a). The test which is often referred to as the SPAG test was not received favourably at the time by many headteachers (Sellgren, 2012). The interviewees suggest that what Ofsted looks for is influenced by government policy. Kylie seems to be suggesting that there is collusion between Ofsted and the government to fail schools, so that they can implement the government's policy to turn schools into academies. Adams (2013), writing in *The Guardian*, indicates that these teachers are not alone in thinking that there may be a conspiracy to fail more schools so they can be academised. The article concludes, however, that the evidence of inspection outcomes between 2009 and 2013 does not support this view: 'Ofsted inspectors now rate more primary schools as good or outstanding than they did at the start of that period – and fewer as inadequate or requiring improvement'. Adams' point is that if Ofsted was in collusion with government the number of schools rated as inadequate or requires improvement would have gone up, but the opposite is true. Other incidents that possibly point to Ofsted working more on behalf of the government than acting independently occurred after the Trojan Horse affair in Birmingham (HOC, 2015a) when Ofsted was instructed to re-inspect many of the schools and several were downgraded from outstanding to special measures. Ofsted also immediately told inspectors to inspect the way schools promote British values (DfE, 2014b; Ofsted, 2014a: 35).

6.5 Other influences and views about the criteria

The teachers were asked for their views about the criteria and if they thought that any key aspect of good quality teaching had been omitted. Their comments often related to the wording of the criteria and the descriptors for good and outstanding:

I think it's quite hard and I think it's really difficult to achieve that outstanding all the time. "Rapid and sustained progress". I think that is really hard to show, to cater for all the children. [Rawinda]

Very difficult.. I don't want to say it's unachievable, but it's not. I've had an outstanding but it's very, very hard and I can't guarantee that every lesson you will see will be that.... I think every day you can have an outstanding lesson like today in my maths. It was brilliant; their enthusiasm, they progressed so much it was amazing. Yesterday they [the pupils] weren't with it. They weren't really grasping it as well. [Caroline]

But it needs to be broken down a little bit more and just to be made clearer because it's so open to interpretation. [Avril]

For a teacher to kind of maintain outstanding on a daily basis is quite a tough kind of order to manage... Some days particular children won't learn, it might not have anything to do with the teaching it might be that they have had a bad morning at home, or they've had, or you know something has happened at home which has then impacted on their learning, so I think a lot of pressure sometimes is put on teachers to make sure all these things are happening. [Bola]

Caroline and Bola are pointing out that pupils' learning does not progress in the linear fashion that sometimes seems to be the expectation based on a reading of the inspection criteria. In addition, pupils have days when their learning is adversely affected because of what is happening outside of school, particularly in areas of high disadvantage. Their points are valid and in some respect taken into consideration by the latest Ofsted guidance to inspectors that they should look

more broadly at teaching, over time (Ofsted, 2015a). However, a fair and reasonable judgement is still dependent on the inspectors' personal interpretation of the evidence.

Rawinda takes issue with the phrase 'rapid and sustained progress', and the fact that it is very difficult to achieve this for all pupils. Kylie also comments on this phrase, with reference to pupils with special educational needs: 'I think the bit about SEN children making rapid and sustained progress is a little bit unrealistic'. Her colleague, Yasmine agrees with her: 'Where does it say that? Well that's not reasonable is it?' As Kylie, quite reasonably points out:

I don't think any children's progress is sustained. It sort of jumps and leaps. They plateau for a while, while things are consolidated and then they have another leap quite often...

Kylie's point about 'leaps and jumps' reflects the way in which pupils (and adults) learn, which is not necessarily linear. Hattie (2012: 66) states that 'progress is among the most critical dimensions for judging the success of schools'. In his earlier text that draws on a meta-analysis of research about teaching and learning, Hattie (2009:40) says that 'students not only bring to school their prior achievement (from preschool, home, and genetics) but also a set of personal dispositions that can have a marked effect on the outcomes of schooling'. He goes on to say that schools can affect pupils' achievement and learning dispositions. The implication is that pupils learn at different rates (see also Cullingford, 2001) and so the expectation that nearly all pupils make sustained progress is indeed difficult to attain in practice.

Inspectors are expected to refer to all groups, including those with special educational needs as making good and sustained progress. Interestingly the later version of the Ofsted handbook changed the wording for the teaching criteria and removed the word 'rapid' and it now says:

As a result, almost all pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, are making sustained progress that leads to outstanding achievement. (Ofsted, 2015a: 61)

This description and others in the criteria are still very much open to interpretation, as several teachers commented on problems with the wording of the criteria (Ofsted, 2014a):

What's the difference between much and most? Some persons think of much and most as very, very similar. [Parva]

Yes, I think it needs to be made clearer and just given maybe examples you know of what the different descriptors are, yes, and videos and things like that, more training. [Amrit]

Like what is “imaginative teaching strategies”? Is that allowing for the teacher to have that opportunity to spread their wings or is it something else like.. if you had examples of what would come under that criteria that might help make it a bit clearer? [Parva]

I remember looking at them and thinking [reading] “the teaching of reading, writing, communication, and mathematics is highly effective”. How is that judged that it is highly effective? That word is just a synonym of outstanding. [Yasmine]

I think looking at these...they all seem to be the same thing, but there are differences in the wording. You have to pick that out and really become familiar with that to understand the difference between say requires improvement and good and between good and outstanding. [Kylie]

Just thinking about the wording... it's just “all teachers have consistently high expectations” is outstanding and then –good- “teachers have high expectations”. Is that different? [Bernard]

These teachers are all making a similar point– that it is hard to interpret the criteria wording and it needs to be clearer. When I asked this question, I showed the teachers a copy of the criteria so that they knew what I was talking about, as I was not trying to test their memory. However, it was evident that in most cases they were not very familiar with them. They told me that the criteria had been discussed in their schools and their senior leaders had generally drawn on them to produce their own version of observation checklists (see next section), but the teachers did not use them in their day to day practice. None of them referred to them when they were planning lessons. They were mainly used for in-school observations or when ‘preparing for an Ofsted inspection’. In some respects, these teachers were indicating that they would like a clearer definition of how to teach in an outstanding way, which goes against the current Ofsted practice of not promoting a particular teaching style. The teachers want to know what inspectors will expect to see when they are being observed, but they do not use the criteria to help them, probably because they do not find them helpful in knowing what good practice is. In this respect, they are correct as the criteria, as I indicated earlier, are not intended as a checklist for lessons but are an overview of teaching as a whole in the school.

These teachers highlight the dilemma that was implied in a comment made by HMI Robert (see Section 4.9): teachers want to be judged outstanding and want to know what inspectors think, but Ofsted does not want to give the impression that it favours a particular way of teaching. The damning Civitas report (Peal, 2014:6) states that Ofsted is the ‘chief arbiter of what constitutes good practice’ in the classroom’, but not just through its inspection criteria but also through its published examples of good practice, which draw from inspection evidence from a range of schools and subject surveys (for example, Ofsted 2012d, 2012f and 2013b). This is an interesting comment which is very relevant to this research. Although Ofsted has recently said that it does not have a preferred teaching style, its published guidance can arguably be interpreted otherwise.

The teachers I interviewed rarely suggested ideas for omissions from the grade descriptions of good and outstanding teaching. Some of the teachers were positive about the criteria:

I think the criteria cover everything. I think that the criteria are broad in the fact that it applies to whatever it is that's being taught. I think the fact that they're highlighting certain groups is perhaps making schools more aware of tracking certain pupils that are vulnerable, or need that extra input.

[Parva]

Yes, I think [the criteria] they are [useful] because it gives you that overview of what it is that will make your teaching outstanding and leads you to aspire to be an outstanding teacher, which obviously everyone aspires to be. So I think in that sense the criteria are very helpful in guiding you in the correct place. I don't think it is a definitive check list that has to be adhered to in every single lesson, but obviously as it says, the school as a whole not just an individual lesson. [Peter]

And it makes the monitoring and assessment in schools even more rigorous... It makes it, you know, everyone is aware of it from teaching support staff to senior leaders, everybody. [Amrit]

Parva likes the fact that the criteria make inspectors and schools focus on all pupils and different groups, which might not otherwise be the case. This focus on different groups was emphasised during the Labour Government years and has been retained in all recent frameworks. Peter's point suggests that teachers want to do as well as they can and having criteria that indicates best practice (i.e. outstanding) gives them something to work towards. Amrit makes a similar point that the criteria help to set a standard for schools to aspire to. The implication is that these benchmarks, however imperfect, help to raise expectations and standards in schools, which is an argument that successive chief inspectors of schools have said publicly. Ofsted publishes an annual report that summarises inspection findings from all of the inspections in the preceding year. The annual reports often

refer to improvements, but do not always claim responsibility for them. For example, HMCI Chris Woodhead introduced the 1997-1998 report with the following:

I have emphasised the achievements of the service in each of the reports I have published since 1993/94, and I have done so with increasing confidence. The statistics this year speak for themselves. In 1993/94 the quality of teaching was judged to be less than satisfactory in 25 per cent, 30 per cent, 19 per cent and 17 per cent of lessons in Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. This year the comparable figures have fallen to 8 per cent, 8 per cent, 10 per cent and 7 per cent. Teaching is now deemed to be good in over half of the lessons observed in each key stage³⁰. (Ofsted, 1998: 14)

Some readers might be surprised by Chris Woodhead's positive tone, as he was renowned for his strident and critical views about teaching. The comparison between the proportions of teaching judged to be less than satisfactory needs to be viewed with caution because the inspection frameworks changed slightly in that period, so inspectors may not have been making entirely comparable judgements although the grading scale was the same. A few years later, HMCI David Bell said when referring to primary schools in the Annual Report for 2003- 2004 (Ofsted, 2004: 20): 'The majority of schools have shown good improvement between inspections, but just under one in ten has not improved enough'. Teaching was recorded as good or better in this annual report in 72% of lessons, which shows a marked improvement from 1997-8, where the comparable figure was 50%. The report went on to describe details about good and bad teaching that could be described as promoting teaching styles.

In the very first Ofsted annual report, which was written before Ofsted inspections of primary schools began (1994), HMCI Sir Stuart Sutherland said that Ofsted is,

³⁰ Ofsted inspections in the year 1993 to 1994 only included secondary schools. Primary and special schools were first inspected according to the Ofsted framework the following year. The primary school data referred to came from HMI inspections.

'fundamentally concerned with securing improvement' (Ofsted, 1993:5);

'improvement' refers to pupils' achievements. Since the first Ofsted inspections took place, whether they have brought about improvement has been a matter for much speculation and research. In the early days of Ofsted inspections, Matthews and Smith (1995:30) reported that 'there is much evidence that preparation for inspection results in school improvement, but evidence is beginning to mount that inspection itself is already having an impact'. De Wolf and Janssens' (2007: 391) review of the impact of inspections looked at the evidence from a range of standpoints and concluded that 'the studies do not provide a clear answer to the question of whether school inspections and performance indicators have causal effects'. They added that inspection visits may have a positive impact on schools but that they probably cause stress. That inspections cause teachers stress has been commented upon by many researchers (for example, de Wolf and Janssens, 2007; Chapman, 2002). Perryman (2007: 174) suggests that stress is not always negative and that the 'positive role of stress can be in enhancing job performance and maintaining motivation, and thus can be linked in a positive way with emotions. Emotions are important in teaching as they are in all professions in which performance plays such an important part (Perryman citing Goffman, 1959)'.

Ofsted has claimed in more recent annual reports that inspection has led to improvement:

The proportion of teaching that is good or outstanding in primary schools has risen from 71% in 2012 to 82% in 2014. (Ofsted, 2014h: 24)

As a result of inspection, children, young people and learners now have a better chance of a good education and high quality care. (Annual report, 2011-12, Ofsted, 2012e: 6)

Two thirds of those schools re-inspected this year that were previously judged as requires improvement got to good or outstanding following a tailored programme of challenge and support from Her Majesty's Inspectors (Annual report 2013-14, Ofsted, 2014h:6)

The most recent annual report for inspections between 2013 and 2014 quoted above suggests that the quality of teaching as judged by inspectors has improved significantly in primary schools. HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw (2014a:1) has declared his belief that inspections bring about improvement: 'as a proud believer in the power and influence of inspection to improve young people's lives'. On the basis of the evidence from Ofsted inspections, it would seem that the quality of teaching in primary schools has improved since 1994. The Ofsted Annual Report of 1995-96 (Ofsted, 1996a) reported that 18% of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory or poor in the 1994-5 inspections. These grades – unsatisfactory and poor – no longer exist and their modern equivalent would be 'inadequate'. In 2013-14, only 2 % of primary schools were judged inadequate overall, which is likely to be close to the proportion of schools where teaching was judged to be inadequate. Therefore, in 20 years the proportion of less than satisfactory teaching has gone from 18% to 2%, although the criteria have possibly become more demanding in that time. It is difficult to assign this improvement solely to Ofsted inspections because of the many other variables that could have influenced it. Nelson and Ehren's (2014:1) review of international research into the impact of inspections concludes that 'inspection may have an impact on any or all of the above, but that this is not necessarily the case'. The 'all of the above' referred to were: school improvement; improvement/introduction of school self-evaluation; behavioural change of teachers (and school leaders) to improve effective school and teaching conditions; and student achievement results. Measuring impact is clearly not straightforward and as Nelson and Ehren (2014) report, it also depends on the response of the school to the inspection.

6.6 Personal factors

All of the teachers I interviewed spoke about their passion for the work with children. As Hattie (2012:19) observed, to be effective teachers requires passion, 'which is rarely talked about in education'. Moyles' (2001) suggestion that early years teachers are particularly prone to talking about their passion for their role,

chimes with comments from some of my interviewees who were early years teachers. Teaching is a very personal experience and being observed is in many ways very intrusive because it can be seen to get in the way of the relationship between teacher and his/her class. Some of the following comments represent some of their personal reflections:

Would be nice to feel appreciated by Ofsted that I'm not just teaching I actually do a lot of other things to enhance the school. [Rawinda]

I find it very dry, very clinical and yet we are in a situation where we are in a caring job and that doesn't reflect what really goes on the classroom. Nowhere in there do you see something about do these children trust the adult that's there. Do they believe in this adult? Because unless they trust and believe in you they will never learn anything from you. [Paula]

I think it always worries in a sense that they don't necessarily take into account your class and their needs. and you know like the difficulties that some of the children have had and bring with them that you are really catering to their needs and helping them as a whole child, but that's not really kind of mentioned in here. [Wilma]

And again these [criteria] are very much about teachers and teaching and actually what I have noticed from what people seem to now be focussing more it's not about the teaching it's about the learning. Actually there is very little in here that's about the learning of the children. It's all very much about what the teachers have done what the teachers have planned, which is contradictory because this is all about what I am doing and yet I get told when they come in they don't really care what I am doing they want to talk to the children. [Susie]

I think Ofsted is the overarching thing that causes the pressure and it then goes down and down. It's not even just about pressure though, it's about to me a teacher is somebody who really cares and really cares about the children and especially we are here. We are in the middle of a housing

estate. There is lots of social deprivation and we have to be very aware of children's home lives in order for them to make progress... [Charlotte]

These comments from the teachers reflect how they feel about their roles and echo the findings of Forrester (2005: 272- 284) who considered that the emphasis on pupils' performance (attainment and progress) 'essentially devalues or makes invisible other important aspects of teachers' work and which might be conceptualized as 'caring' activities'. She suggests that this is of more significance to women teachers as their role 'shifts significantly from its association with the feminine qualities of mothering and nurturing towards a more masculine culture of management and performance'. This view chimes with the teachers' comments above, as they spoke about the lack of an Ofsted focus on the 'whole child' and how their role involves more than just teaching.

Gu and Day's (2006: 1303) research into teachers' resilience suggests that much research about the impact of government policies on teachers has 'been produced by those who are critical of the reforms themselves'. Gu and Day comment that despite the negative research:

the reality is that most teachers adapt, at least survive, and do not leave the profession. Whether their work is more closely prescribed as a result of reform or not, they continue to do the best they can for the students they teach under changed and challenging circumstances, usually with their beliefs about their core purposes and values intact. (Gu and Day, 2006: 1303)

This finding by Gu and Day (2006) reflects very closely what I discovered from my interviews with teachers. Despite their sometimes quite critical comments about Ofsted and the criteria for teaching, they were keen to reinforce their belief in their work with children. Of course, it could be argued that they wanted me to hear this. For example, Caroline said:

We're happy being teachers still. It's not obviously affected us that much. We understand we have to have criteria, otherwise how are you all going to be consistent and achieve and obviously at the end of the day it's all about the children and how much they can attain and great that you want them to achieve rapid progress, it's just sometimes not realistic.

Caroline's comment followed from her negative reflections of being inspected and about the amount of monitoring that her school leaders now undertake (see next section), but I think illustrated Gu and Day's (2006) findings well in her obvious resilience. Reay (1997) reflects that 'while the habitus allows for individual agency it also predisposes individuals towards certain ways of behaving' and quotes from Bourdieu:

The habitus, as a system of dispositions to a certain practice, is an objective basis for regular modes of behaviour, and thus for the regularity of modes of practice, and if practices can be predicted...this is because the effect of the habitus is that agents who are equipped with it will behave in a certain way in certain circumstances. (Bourdieu, 1990b: 77 quoted in Reay, 1997:355)

Reay (2004: 433) says that 'Bourdieu views the dispositions, which make up habitus, as the products of opportunities and constraints framing the individual's earlier life experiences'. Applying this to the teachers I interviewed, although they have different 'life experiences', different routes into teaching and teach in different schools, they share a similar response, an institutional habitus, to the regime of accountability and Ofsted inspection whilst still retaining their individual agency. Ball (2003: 223) describes the tension between teachers' 'belief and representation', in being true to their own values or conforming to the expectations of the accountability and performativity. Ball (2003:223) refers to the particular vulnerability of teachers of special needs because these pupils contribute less to external measure of 'improved performance' (such as attainment and progress). This comment has some synergy with a concern raised by Kylie, who is a SENCO, about the criteria expecting rapid and sustained progress from all groups of pupils,

including those with SEN. However, she also said that Ofsted's focus on vulnerable pupils is positive and gives credibility to her work with these pupils.

6.7 How schools use the criteria

All of the schools where I interviewed headteachers and teachers are engaged in rigorous programmes of performance management (appraisal). Wilkins (2011) notes the wealth of research into the growth of the performance management and performativity culture in schools (for example, he cites Day et al, 2006 and Troman et al, 2007). The government introduced performance related pay for teachers (DfE, 2013a) from September 2013, not long before my interviews with teachers, so this was a topic that was uppermost in their minds.

Schools are implementing performance management for a number of reasons: because it is government policy; presumably, because they think it is worthwhile; but also to help prepare their schools for an imminent inspection. Wilkins (2011: 392) links the self-regulatory regimes in schools to the impact of Ofsted inspections and says that school managers act as 'the ever-present inspector within' (quoting from Troman 1997: 363). Wilkins adds that 'in the performative school, therefore, leadership becomes inextricably linked with inspection (citing Ferguson et al. 2000)'. This view of leaders adopting inspection strategies to monitor the work of teachers was evident in the schools where I interviewed the teachers.

Teachers spoke about how their performance management was linked to the Teachers Standards (DfE, 2011a) rather than or in addition to Ofsted criteria. They described how performance management in their schools entails scheduled lesson observations along with more frequent 'learning walks' (Kirkland, 2003), where the senior leaders visit several classrooms for a short time, usually for a particular focus. They described the setting of targets based on pupils' progress as well as teaching quality and other aspects of their work (as set out in the Teachers' Standards, DfE, 2011a; 2013a). Perryman (2006: 148) describes how a school in special measures is under constant surveillance, which she calls 'panoptic

performativity', but this could be ascribed to schools that are not in special measures because of the scrutiny, not necessarily by Ofsted, but by senior leaders in their own schools. This monitoring by senior leaders happens much more frequently than inspections, and my interviewees spoke about it:

I remember coming to [headteacher] and saying to him I have got no idea what it is you are wanting. I don't know any more. I thought I used to know and actually I did ok when Ofsted was here I got a good. I no longer seem to know what it is that you want. I know how to teach and I am confident that I am a good teacher but I don't know what it is that you want when you come in anymore and sadly now that you have got the performance related pay you do have to sometimes fix because this is something I said to you the other day as well. My lessons that I plan for an observation are not necessarily the lessons that I believe my children learn the best in.I know they coming to look for certain aspects so I make sure that it is built into my lesson... [Susie]

Susie was reflecting on how she feels about being observed by her headteacher, who is under pressure to observe lessons. Her performativity is evident in her comment about changing what she does when the headteacher comes into her room to observe the lesson (Ball, 2003; Perryman, 2006). Other teachers described the process of performance management in their schools:

There is constant monitoring going on which actually in a way I prefer the just dropping-in because she sees me how I really am with the children. It's nicer. [Charlotte]

As part of our performance management cycle, so we get observed every term and we do get good feedback. We have the lesson observation form which is similar to Ofsted's. [Wilma]

I think there can be too much of it. That's unnecessary cause you start to feel like why can't they just trust us doing a good job, but not to do it all

would cause problems because it's just good to keep track of how people are doing. [Yasmine]

I don't blame our senior management because they are getting pressure from the local authority. They are getting pressure from the government.
[Alicia]

The comments reflect a mixture of views and highlight differences in school enactments of national policy (Braun et al, 2012). There seems, however, to be a general acceptance by the teachers of the inevitability of performance management and of being observed by their senior leadership team, as observed by Wilkins (2011: 404): 'the ease with which these teachers were able to hold on to their sense of autonomy whilst accepting (and generally welcoming) an intensive regime of accountability to both internal and external managerialism'. The teachers seem to appreciate that their senior management are under pressure from the local authority and government. On the other hand, Yasmine suggests that there is too much monitoring. In general, though, the teachers welcome feedback from their senior leaders and the use of a wider range of evidence than just lessons. Rawinda said that she feels more at ease when observed by someone she, and the pupils, know; it is less threatening.

One of the schools includes pupils in observing lessons and giving feedback to teachers. This seemed to have been well established and accepted by the teachers:

They [pupils] do assemblies and they go on walks, they go around the school and give like feedback about what could be improved....They give feedback to us, they give feedback to [headteacher], they give feedback to whoever it is appropriate. [Parva]

This practice is unusual but growing and perhaps reflects the confidence of the school leaders in their practice. It is another example of how schools choose to enact policies in very different ways (Braun et al, 2011).

6.8 Grading lessons

Most of the teachers interviewed spoke about the use of grades for their teaching. Some indicated that they liked having grades.

Yes, because you know where you stand, don't you? [Martha]

I would like want to know what it [the grade] was and it's ridiculous because it's very sad but that's not indicative of the school or even Ofsted. I think that's just as a professional you always kind of wanting to know as well as what did I do wrong, what knowing where you gonna go next, but it is that kind of was it an outstanding, was it any good is what I mean.

[Wilma]

Wilma seems to appreciate that she should not want to know 'her grade', but she cannot help herself. Martha's wanting to know where she stands suggests that she needs to be given a grade (a number or a word) in order to know that. However, some headteachers I interviewed felt that once a teacher had heard the grade they often failed to listen to anything else. Interestingly, since September 2014, inspectors have not been grading teaching in lesson observations, but still give feedback on what went well and what could improve (strengths and weaknesses) (Ofsted, 2014a). In my experience, this feedback (without grades) has been well received by teachers, who have not asked me to give a grade, but have wanted to know if 'it was all right?'. Waldergrave and Simons (2014: 22) identify the use of grades for lesson observations as problematic and state that 'in practice many teachers who receive teaching grades may feel that this is – effectively – a judgement on their lesson or their quality overall' and add that headteachers may continue to grade lessons in order to provide evidence (for Ofsted) to inform their own self-evaluation of the quality of teaching. Waldergrave and Simons' (2014)

observations chime with teachers and headteachers' comments during my research.

Teachers did not all want to be given a grade when observed. For example, Susie said:

You want to know what you are doing well and you want to know what it is you need to do for the next step. I think it's as long as you know you've got somebody that's coming in and they fully understand and appreciate your class, your dynamics, you know that type of thing to actually to think our SLT [senior leadership team] are actually very good at that. You take on board what they are saying I think it is interesting still because at the end of the day Ofsted are gonna come and they are gonna grade you so I do think there's still needs to be if that is the bar they are setting, we still need to know roughly where we are, but I don't think you need to be graded.
[Susie]

I think maybe just giving comments and not grading them is something I feel might be better. [Amrit]

Susie is indicating that she respects those who will be observing her because they know the school and the pupils. She understands that Ofsted grades teaching and can appreciate why the school may choose to do this as well, but would prefer not to be graded. Waldergrave and Simmons (2014) observed that although lessons have not been graded since 2009, many teachers who responded to their request for evidence suggested that inspectors did give them a grade for their lesson. A few of my interviewees said the same. Of course, the inspectors could have said 'the teaching in your lesson was good', which the teacher may have recalled as 'your lesson was good' even though this wasn't said. Grading is controversial and the outstanding grade is 'one of the most pernicious aspects of our inspection

regime', according to Hobby³¹ (2015). The grades are probably here to stay as they are included in the Inspection Handbook for September 2015 (2015k).

6.9 Consistency of inspections

The teachers I interviewed commented on the different approaches of inspection teams that they had encountered. As with the headteachers, their views about consistency often came from talking to teachers from other schools rather than their own personal experience, which was, on the whole, positive about their last inspection. Here are some of their comments:

I think that's one of my concerns, the whole thing it's still very much so subjective... I still think from the guidelines what one person views as something and what another person views as something can be quite different. [Wilma]

There's also an issue that we had with different Ofsted inspectors coming in and different people sort of doing some observations with us. We were told do this particular thing for success criteria on the board ... and then another person came in and said "where is your learning intention rather than success criteria"? and we switched things round and we switched things back. So we were doing the things that we were almost been prescribed and we weren't sure whether it was. So one person liked it one person didn't.. [Bernard]

I think it depends on which inspector comes into your lesson. I think that's quite important. One person's idea can be very different to somebody else's idea and that's in Ofsted and within schools- whoever comes into you [lesson]. I think that even looking at the criteria one person can interpret what they class as being outstanding and someone else can say something different. [Bola]

...it's not the fault of the criteria, but how you interpret it. [Simon]

³¹ Russell Hobby is the general secretary of the NAHT.

These teachers are concerned about how inspectors and school leaders can have different interpretations of the criteria and how this might impact on them when they are observed. The removal of grades from lesson observations should allay these fears, but the interviews took place before this change. Bernard seems to be referring to the different advice that his school has received from different consultants, rather than Ofsted inspectors necessarily: one consultant advocated success criteria, whilst another was keen on learning intentions.

The following conversation between two colleagues reflects their uncertainty about how Ofsted inspectors judge teaching:

Bernard: I read [online] that the teacher did an all singing and all dancing brilliant lesson that got requires improvement or inadequate because the books hadn't been marked for six months... that makes sense.

Wilma: Yes.

Bernard: On the flipside of that, do you reckon if somebody came and observed the lesson where they were doing nothing but silent reading...?

Wilma: That's what they say in there that they got an outstanding judged on the books and the different bits...

Bernard: If you just had a class silent reading for twenty minutes, but your books and everything was [good], would that be outstanding?

Wilma: [reading] "in contrast he graded the teacher outstanding where students sat reading in silence because of the exceptional quality of students' work and the teacher's marking in exercise books. He told both teachers what his conclusions were". That would be hard to grade someone outstanding... if they [pupils] are reading.

This is an interesting conversation between colleagues Bernard and Wilma. They had picked up on a quote from an HMI that they find interesting because it really

points towards the importance of marking and pupils' work rather than the teaching performance. The quote came from an Ofsted publication that was sent to schools in February 2014 (Ofsted, 2014f). Although they seemed to appreciate what the HMI was saying, there was still doubt about just letting pupils read silently when they were being observed by an inspector. The idea of the 'performance' seems to be ingrained and hard to overcome –reflecting possibly their lowly position in the field of inspection. Part of their disbelief in the 'new regime' is their uncertainty about the inspectors having the same understanding, which reflects concern about consistency. HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw attempted to counter concerns about consistency in a speech to the Association of College Lecturers in April 2014 when he said:

Can I turn now to the perennial complaint of inconsistent inspection? I won't deny that any system based partly on human subjectivity is fallible. But I have to say to you that there is little evidence to suggest that the number of misjudgements³² has increased – on the contrary. The latest figures show that 91% of schools are satisfied with the outcome of their inspection – a proportion that hasn't significantly altered in years. In a survey of 850 schools that have been inspected in the last four months, almost 85% of them believed that the inspection process had helped them to improve. Indeed, the number of complaints about inspection outcomes actually went down last year. (Wilshaw, 2014a)

Wilshaw's response does not specifically address the issue of consistency. I believe the point he makes is that if schools were very concerned about consistency then there would probably be more complaints about inspections. There appears to be a high level of satisfaction amongst those who responded to the survey.

Matthews and Sammons' (2004: 82) review of the impact of Ofsted inspections concluded that 'Internal reviews and evaluations point to a high degree of reliability

³² By which he presumably means when inspectors can the school's overall judgement wrong.

and validity in inspectors' judgements'. They based this conclusion on tests carried out by Ofsted to validate the reliability of inspectors' judgements (Matthews et al, 1998) and found 'an acceptable degree of complete correlation for such open ended judgements and, where pairs of judgements differ, it is very rarely by more than one grade on a seven-point scale'. This view of consistency contrasts strongly with the strident observation by Civitas (Peal, 2014: 49) that the 'practice of lesson observations has been shown to be an inexact science, with judgements that are both invalid and inconsistent'. The Civitas report (Peal, 20114) is based on a scrutiny of inspection reports and a 'call for evidence' from teachers in recently inspected schools. The basis of the statement about inconsistency of judgements does not seem firmly grounded in reliable evidence. That is not to say that inspectors' judgements are likely to be totally consistent, but that the statement by Civitas is not backed up by evidence.

6.10 Performativity

Some aspects of performativity have already been referred to in this chapter (see Sections 6.9, for example). It was clear that most of the teachers felt that they had to perform for the inspector or even for their own school leader, when they are observed:

I do also I think also that probably when Ofsted come and inspect generally they probably do not see the schools' most exciting lessons because you wouldn't choose to take too many risks so you play safe, so I probably wouldn't take them outside and re-enact the Battle of Waterloo. [Alicia]

You're kind of doing what they want to see where you wouldn't normally do that in the flow of a lesson, is what I sometimes I find. [Rawinda]

Well, you up the game, as we say, you jazz it up a bit more. You want to show your best as well. So you want to show everything you can do, but sometimes it can be a little too much. [Caroline]

Yes, I find that if I'm under so much pressure I might forget something, or not do something I might do naturally because I think oh no they want to see this, I've got to do this. [Caroline]

I know there are some people who say that there shouldn't be this obsession with not being on the carpet for so long because sometimes you need if it's a particularly tricky concept, you need to be on the carpet for a while and as long as you are reading the children and they are coping with that, then it's ok to do that. There is a slight thing that you are not allowed on the carpet for any longer than this time and if you are on the carpet for any longer than this time it's a bad lesson. [Charlotte]

I think that whole performance, people need to be aware of. It's not about us it's about the learning of our children and the progress of the learning of our children and you know it's trying to get away from you know it's all about me, it all about them, it's the little ones in front of us. [Peter]

These are an interesting range of comments from the teachers, but all reflect their anxiety about being observed. For the most part they indicated that they would do something different when observed. Some, like Bernard and Caroline, said that they would try new approaches, although were aware of the dangers of this. Others were more cautious and suggested that they would play it safe and not 're-enact the battle of Waterloo', as Alicia said. Their lowly position in the field of inspection (see figure 3.2), with relatively little symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986), seem to be the driving forces behind their responses to being inspected. Differences between their responses did not seem linked to their school context, though could be explored in further research. The similarities I argue reflect teachers' institutional habitus (Jenkins, 2002; Lupton and Thrupp, 2013), their common disposition towards being inspected. They know that inspectors' focus is on the pupils, but they are still worried about not performing well for the short time in which they will be observed. They are concerned that they will be criticised for spending too long on the carpet, for example, as this was an area often criticised by inspectors. Performativity and inspection have been written about a great deal (for example,

Ball, 2003; Jeffrey, 2002; Osgood, 2006; Perryman, 2006). There is almost a sense now that performativity is part of teachers' habitus:

a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions (Bourdieu, 1977:83).

Most of the teachers I interviewed could be described by what Wilkins (2011) calls 'post-performative' because they have been part of the performative culture all their working lives and even as students themselves.

6.11 Impact on professionalism and autonomy

I asked the teachers whether they considered that having Ofsted criteria for the quality of teaching impacted on their professionalism and autonomy. I did not attempt to define the concepts of professionalism and autonomy with the interviewees as I was interested simply to see how they responded. The issue of teaching as a profession has been discussed at length (for example, Runte, 1995; Newland, 2014). Brehony (2005: 32) suggested that because of the National Curriculum and, under New Labour's policies and National Strategies, 'primary school teachers have lost control not only of what to teach but how to teach it and hence much of their professional autonomy and discretion'. McBeath (2012: 15) lists 12 characteristics of professionalism, most of which can be applied to teaching. The issue of whether teaching is a profession was brought into question when the former Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, allowed academies and free schools to appoint unqualified teachers (Newland, 2012). Newland notes that Gove often refers to the 'craft' of teaching. Wilkins (2011:390) says that teaching has been viewed as a 'quasi-profession (Etzioni, 1969)' but as a profession in 'public and political discourse'. Wilkins (2011) continues that the concept is contested by academic scholars.

Interestingly, when asked this question, none of the teachers questioned the fact that teaching is a profession. Some of their responses are included below:

No, I don't think so. I think every professional needs a benchmark and to a certain extent this is ours because you wouldn't expect a doctor to treat you if they have never had any kind of person checking up on them, they're qualified or they're doing the right thing. I think every profession needs something. [Parva]

I don't always feel I have a lot of autonomy, because I'm always working towards.. I'm working for Ofsted in a sense. [Charlotte]

I enjoy the job because yes I'm told what to do in a framework, but how I do that, exactly when I do that is largely my own choice and that's autonomy I want and I have that. [Simon]

I don't think it undermines the professionalism, because I think it's important that you have some sort of criteria or benchmarks for you to be aware of, need to understand and to use in your teaching, so I think actually it heightens your professionalism and makes you a more professional person. [Peter]

I don't think it undermines teachers' professionalism in any way and in terms of autonomy I don't think on a day to day basis it kind of affects it. It might do when you're being inspected, just because people might do things very differently. [Bola]

Most of their answers above suggest that they do not feel it affects their professionalism and even, in the case of Peter, that having criteria enhances it. They disagree about autonomy. Simon clearly feels that he still has enough autonomy within the constraints of a framework (which could be the National Curriculum as much as Ofsted criteria). Parva agrees to a certain extent because she feels, like Peter, that professionals need benchmarks to guide their practice. Whereas, Charlotte (who teaches early years age pupils) thinks that she has to do

things 'for Ofsted' which curtails how she would like to teach and hence her autonomy.

Martha adopts a very practical approach and says, like Bola, that it does not impact on her professionalism or autonomy, adding: 'You're there for the children anyway and just being told you should have high expectations of children, that's not going to stop that. No I don't think it should anyway... No. I just get on with it really'. Paula felt that her autonomy was 'definitely' affected. She also considered that her professionalism is undermined:

I think it undermines our professionalism in that we are professionals we know what's best for our children and we want what's best for them and this means we play a game even when we know that's not...we teach a lesson with them in there and then we re-teach it the way we should have done afterwards because we are playing to a list and I think that undermines our professionalism. We know what we are doing, don't we?
[Paula]

The contrast between Martha and Paula's response is stark. It may be a factor of their different experience as teachers. Paula has been teaching for 26 years whereas Martha and Bola have been teaching for 9 and 8 years respectively. However, it could just be to do with their different personalities. Wilkins (2011) would, however, describe Martha and Bola as 'post-performative' teachers, whereas Paula started teaching before Ofsted, but around the introduction of the National Curriculum.

The effect of different teachers' personality and confidence was also apparent in some of their answers. For example, Peter said:

I think it's all down to interpretation and the use of the criteria is making sure that they don't become bogged down and stifled by the criteria and thinking that that is the only thing they can focus on. For example, if there

is something happening in the lesson which is quite dynamic, quite innovative, you know, not to worry, or panic, thinking I can't do it because that is veering off the criteria. It's being able to have the confidence and professionalism to take those aspects on board as well.

Peter is indicating that he has the confidence to retain his professionalism and autonomy even when being observed. Dave also did not think that his professionalism or autonomy are undermined. He said:

Overall, I mean, the grade descriptors themselves, you know I don't think it either undermines or constrains, I think it looks to build a loose framework...[Dave]

The teachers I interviewed could all be described as working in what Jeffrey and Troman (2012: 195) describe as 'performative institutions' and they have 'embraced the school's performative development'. They have developed an institutional habitus within their own schools, based on the school culture, ethos and context, which fosters and develops autonomy and a teachers' institutional habitus that runs across schools as a common response to external accountability in the field of inspection, finding ways to enhance their cultural capital which informs their professional identity. The teachers' (and headteachers') responses suggest that they are working in what Clapham (2014) describes post- fabrication regimes where their readiness for Ofsted has become entrenched and reformulated into daily practice and not about 'putting on a show'. They believe what they are doing is in the pupils' best interest. Some teachers have the confidence to carry on with their usual practice when an inspector (or senior leader) walks into their classroom. Others are less confident about being observed. Their responses may be a product of their different years of teaching experience, or of their gender, or the different age group that they teach or simply to do with their personalities. These issues would need to be explored in further research.

Wilma and Bernard who teach in the same school illustrate the point about the institutional habitus in their answers below:

I don't think it undermines our professionalism. I think the way it's used here.....we're still given some of that freedom to kind of make very sensible choices to help our children. I don't know if every school is again, it's kind of very different. [Wilma]

And I think as you talking about your own school, it's the expectations are high with [named senior leaders] and that it's the autonomy, like we don't have to hand in like lesson plans with regarding the criteria to [named head] weeks in advance where other schools have to... I think it's with [named head] I don't feel I'm being undermined like with in terms of my teaching. It's very much a learning school. We try things out. We help each other out. [Bernard]

Bernard and Wilma feel very supported in their school and appreciate the way that they are treated by their senior leaders. This may contribute to their feelings of not having their professionalism undermined by Ofsted criteria.

6.12 Do we need Ofsted criteria?

When asked this question, the response was generally a qualified 'yes':

To a degree because you know where you've got to go, say you're at a good, I know how to get to be outstanding, works either way I think you do need criteria otherwise people are so different at least we are following the same. [Caroline]

Yes, to make a judgement you have to have criteria, you can't just go into any observation blind and not have some sort of idea of what it is that you are looking for so in that sense they are extremely important, but yes I

think you are right it is how it's interpreted by individual schools and how its interpreted nationally is the difference. [Peter]

And again is it a good thing nationally, or at school level. If I was to design a system I would come up with one very similar because you have to have a level playing field in which to go in, can you understand that? [Simon]

For parents to know that the teaching and learning in the school is good reassures them and I've been looking for a house recently and all of the estate agents all they talk about is how there's an outstanding school there.. I would say do you know, how do you know, because Ofsted have said something about it, really? [Bernard]

I think it's interesting that in Finland that is the number one education system in the world they don't even have any inspection at all in their schools and it doesn't seem to make a bad impact and there is no testing either until children get to eighteen. [Kylie]

The teachers seem to be saying that they can generally see the need for an external system like Ofsted and for criteria to provide a level playing field for schools and as Bernard said, for parents to be able to compare schools. Kylie makes an interesting point that Finland which is hailed as a top performing country, does not have an inspection system. However, teachers have higher status in Finland and are all trained to Masters level, with a focus on research-based learning (Crouch, 2015). Even regular critics of Ofsted (for example, ATL, 2012; Cummings, 2013; Peal, 2014; Waldegrave and Simons, 2014) generally conclude that such an organisation is needed, albeit with modifications.

Many other countries have systems of external evaluation (inspection) as described by Altrichter and Kemethofer (2015) who reviewed the impact of different countries' inspection models on school improvement and accountability pressures. Ehren et al (2015) describe the impact on school improvement of the Dutch system of inspection, which has a longer history than that of England as it was established according to Ehren et al in 1801. Their findings paint a more positive picture of

inspection in Holland than in England (though the authors do not compare them directly). The Dutch system is based on the sharing of inspection standards and 'risk-based inspection', which is not dissimilar to the risk assessment carried out by Ofsted for outstanding and good schools (Ofsted, 2015e). The authors (Ehren et al, 2015: 321) conclude that 'school principals seem to be the key linking pin in this network of actors as they (more than teachers) feel that inspection standards set expectations for good education and that stakeholders are sensitive to inspection reports'. The difference between the response of teachers and headteachers to the 'inspection standards' (criteria) chimes with my research and is considered more in the concluding remarks in Chapter 7.

6.13 Summary

I was aware during the interviews of my own positionality, not only as a researcher but also as a school inspector and former HMI, and how this might have influenced the teachers' replies. Only two teachers knew me beforehand and were aware that I was an Ofsted inspector. It is hard to say whether this affected their responses. I tried to put all of the teachers at ease and shared with them the criteria so they could refer to it when answering. Having two teachers together might have encouraged them to be bolder and more forthright in their answers as the balance of power was shifted (Kvale, 2007). It certainly seemed to help them to open up as they had time to think of answers whilst their colleague was speaking. Most of them had received the questions beforehand and had time to reflect on their answers which helped the interviews to flow. Where this was not the case, I found that I had to prompt more to draw them out.

The teachers' backgrounds, individual personalities, school context, gender and teaching experience are all possible factors that could influence their views about Ofsted. There was not enough evidence to draw any conclusions about these different characteristics in terms of their responses and this would be worthy of further research.

What emerged strongly from the interviews was their commitment to working with children and respect for their own senior leaders. They also demonstrated Gu and Day's (2006) idea of resilience in the way they were keen to tell me that despite the increased accountability they still enjoy teaching. They also seem to accept the existence of Ofsted, presumably as their position at the bottom of the hierarchy in the field of inspection means that they have relatively little symbolic capital and therefore little choice. In many ways an Ofsted inspection impacts more directly on teachers than their senior leaders, who may not be observed teaching (Blunsdon, 2002). In a primary school, particularly, a teacher establishes a close relationship with his/her pupils and gets to know each of them well. Some of the teachers spoke about this and how they felt that the Ofsted criteria/ inspectors do not seem to take enough notice of this. They were nearly all working in areas of high social disadvantage and whilst not complaining, said that that this was also not given enough weight during an inspection. As Paula said: 'it doesn't take into account the fact that the child's come in that day and had no sleep that night'. Much of Bourdieu's work was concerned with the impact of social conditions on individual habitus and it may be that schools in disadvantaged contexts develop particular institutional habituses that reflect their context. There is a danger in this as identified in recent research (Harbron, 2015), which suggested that teachers underestimate the abilities of pupils from poor families. However, I did not explore this in my research.

The teachers who had experienced an inspection in the past two or three years were mainly positive about the experience. The way that inspectors related to them, for example, by being pleasant, and giving positive feedback, was important to the teachers. They spoke about the inconsistency of inspections but mainly in response to what they had heard from other schools. Muijs and Chapman (2009: 32) in writing about the history of Ofsted comment on the variability of 'quality and quantity of feedback' to teachers but add that 'lesson observation and quality feedback are potentially important levers for improvement'. This statement is based, according to Muijs and Chapman (2009), on research that indicates that teachers often respond to feedback from inspectors and intend to change their

practice (Brimblecombe et al, 1995; Chapman, 2001). However, there is not universal agreement about the impact of feedback. Case (2000:618) in a very negative review of the impact of Ofsted states that 'teachers in these schools categorically assert that their effectiveness, and the corresponding achievement of their pupils, did not rise as a result of inspection'. The schools in question were successful ones, so this might have been a factor in how they responded.

Webster et al (2012) provide some insight into the factors that affect school improvement, and particularly what makes teachers change their practice. Their research was concerned with the way that teachers manage pupils' behaviour, but could have implications for other aspects of teaching pedagogy. Webster et al (2012: 15) conclude that there are positive and negative impacts to inspection. They cite a Dutch study (Ehren and Visscher, 2008) which showed that inspection can promote school improvement. However, they note that other research has indicated that factors such as the school's context and culture have an impact on how a school responds to an inspection (for example, Chapman, 2001). I did not explore the context factors in any depth during the interviews, but would it be an important area for further research.

None of the interviewees' schools was in an Ofsted category such as special measures or serious weaknesses, though two had been judged as 'requires improvement' when inspected in 2013. The teachers were very aware of the importance of the Ofsted outcome and how the observation of lessons by inspectors contributed to that. They did not want to let their colleagues down by having a poor observation. This put pressure on them and it was clear that some of them responded better to stress than others, or it could have been bravado when answering the question, or what Goffman (1959) refers to as 'saving face'.

The teachers were aware of the inspection criteria, which they explained had been discussed at staff meetings and often adapted for use by their senior leaders when observing their lessons. They did not, though, make use of them when planning lessons, which is not inappropriate as the criteria are designed to be used in

making an overall judgement of the quality of teaching and not for individual lessons. They spoke about what they perceived to be the changes to the criteria or more accurately changes to the way that inspectors observe lessons. They often indicated that inspectors' focus is now more on the pupils rather than the teaching performance. They like the idea of inspectors judging teaching over time, based on a wider range of evidence. Despite this, several of them were still unsure about how they would be observed and they said that they would change what they do if an inspector came into their lesson. They were not convinced that an inspector could judge teaching as outstanding if they observed pupils reading silently for 20 minutes (Ofsted, 2014f). Some of the myths about what inspectors look for (Ofsted, 2012d) are still evident; for example, the need to show that pupils are making progress in a 20-minute observation. At the end of the interviews I explained some of the recent developments to the teachers, as I felt that this was part of a reflexive collaboration approach (Burke, 2002).

The other changes commented on by the teachers were the inclusion of different groups of pupils, such as those eligible for the pupil premium, which they felt to be an example of a government initiative that impacted on Ofsted inspections. Several interviewees suggested that this focus on different groups is positive. One teacher said that Ofsted's emphasis on these different groups helped her as a SENCO. Several of the teachers considered that Ofsted was influenced by the government, though not necessarily in respect of the inspection criteria. They spoke about the government raising the bar and the impact of England's low performance in international performance tables (for example in PISA tests).

The teachers' biggest concern about the criteria was their vagueness and openness to different interpretations. They felt that the differences between grades was not clear enough and disliked the term 'requires improvement', which they read as failure. The implications of failing an inspection or even being judged requires improvement are so high now that this is putting extreme pressure on schools. Several of the teachers I interviewed thought that there was collusion between Ofsted and the government to fail schools so that they could be

academised, although the evidence suggests that this is not the case (Adams, 2013).

The number of changes to the inspection framework and handbooks was commented on by the teachers. Some of the changes can be assigned to changes of political direction and focus, such as the inclusion of the Labour Government's ECM agenda (DfES, 2004), the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, phonics, the Coalition Government's pupil premium (DfE, 2010b) and reduction of areas to inspect (DfE, 2010a). Courtney (2014, 10) describes a 'post-panoptic' era in which 'schools and their leaders are playing in a game with moving goal posts and ordered to comply with these changing criteria at all times through such mechanisms as 'Parent View' and inspectors' conversations with pupils'. Courtney argues that schools attempt to comply and because of the changed focus (particularly since 2012) devote less time to issues such as pupils' health and community cohesion (which were part of inspection frameworks from 2005 to 2011) and more on pupils' progress. He draws on Bourdieu's (2000) concept of misrecognition in relation to headteachers being unaware of their own compliance with the Ofsted requirements.

Courtney (2014: 12) asserts that the changes to the inspection frameworks are part of a means of retaining power over schools and that the goal (Ofsted's?) is 'to render visible the incapacity of (certain) subjects to comply; to contribute to a discourse of subject incompetence; and to disrupt their fabrications, their identities'. He continues that:

In a post-panoptic regime, the fabrication must be continually destabilised to betray the players' ignorance of the rules and the artifice of their performed identity. In the current inspection regime, this has been achieved through changing the framework; the more often this is done, the less able headteachers are to construct an effective fabrication. (Courtney, 2014:12)

The implication is that Ofsted has intended to maintain control and power through constant changes of the framework. My interpretation is that of Ofsted's misrecognition of the impact of the changes, rather than a deliberate act to impose control and to undermine headteachers (Courtney's interpretation). My reasons for this view are based on my own time as HMI, conversations with current and recent HMI for this research and the way that HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw (2014a) has responded to the recent criticisms (for example, about preferred teaching approaches). However, I do believe that the frequent changes to the frameworks and criteria are not helpful to schools, even though they are often introduced for that reason.

Ball (2003: 224) describes fabrications as 'versions of an organization (or person) which does not exist – they are not 'outside the truth' but neither do they render simply true or direct accounts – they are produced purposefully in order 'to be accountable'. This description fits the way that some of the teachers I interviewed described how they change how they teach when observed (by Ofsted inspectors or senior leaders).

Most of the teachers could see the value of Ofsted criteria and suggested that it was important to have a benchmark to aim for and helped with consistency, albeit that they felt that that was a problem. The idea of having grades for teaching and lessons provoked a range of responses. Some like and want grades 'to know where you stand' (Martha). Others were less sure and would prefer simply knowing what went well and how to improve. They spoke about how their senior leaders monitored their teaching regularly and thoroughly including lesson observations and learning walks. One teacher said that this was not a problem because she and the children say 'oh that's Mrs X she's always around the school' (Rawinda) and Charlotte said, 'I prefer the just dropping-in....because she sees ..how I really am with the children'. The amount of monitoring by the senior leaders was though seen as excessive by one teacher: 'That's unnecessary cause you start to feel like why can't they just trust us doing a good job' (Yasmine). On the whole, though they seem to have accepted this level of monitoring as part of being a teacher today

and understand that senior leaders do it for performance management and to ensure that the school is well prepared for an Ofsted inspection.

The teachers illustrate Ofsted's dilemma: should Ofsted provide very explicit detail in the teaching criteria whilst not trying to promote a particular style of teaching? In one respect the teachers I interviewed seem to want Ofsted to set out more explicitly what it expects them to do in a lesson, but I believe that they only want this so that when they are observed they will come out as at least good. I got the impression that they are confident they know how to teach and know what is best for their pupils. They understand the importance of progress, but also that pupils progress at different rates and have good and bad days. Most do not feel that their professionalism is undermined by having Ofsted criteria, probably because they do not really take much notice of it except when they are inspected, when fabrication and performativity prevail (Ball, 2003; Perryman, 2009). Some felt that their autonomy is undermined by having to teach a certain way when they are observed. They do not want to be constrained by having to play the game for observers. Even though they knew at that time that inspectors would not be judging the lesson or them as teachers, most of them still obviously think of being observed as a performance. Performativity is embedded. Their institutional habitus includes a blend of unconscious and conscious performativity. Their schools are performative institutions' (Jeffrey and Troman, 2012: 195) or post-panoptic (Courtney, 2014).

The teachers' position at the bottom of the field of inspection in terms of their symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) was evident. They lack power but are subject to the most scrutiny. Their personal space (the classroom) is invaded by being monitored so frequently by their senior leaders. Anticipation of inspection creates stress (Perryman, 2007) and probably comes from their headteachers for whom the Ofsted outcome is more significant in many ways; they could be forced to resign should the school be judged inadequate (Lepkowska, 2014). I think it is symbolic to conclude with Caroline's comment which reflects teachers' mixed emotions: love of their work; acceptance of Ofsted's criteria, but feeling that they are not always realistic:

We're happy being teachers still. It's not obviously affected us that much.

We understand we have to have criteria, otherwise how are you all going to be consistent and achieve and obviously at the end of the day it's all about the children and how much they can attain and great that you want them to achieve rapid progress, it's just sometimes not realistic. .

Chapter 7 Discussion of the findings

7.1 Introduction

This chapter includes a summary of the findings from my research, followed by a discussion of some of the methodology limitations and possible areas for further research. It starts by addressing each of the research questions in turn and ends with some concluding thoughts.

The aim of this research was to review how the criteria designed by Ofsted, by which inspectors evaluate the quality of teaching, have developed and changed since 1993, when the first Ofsted inspections took place, until 2015. Whilst there has been much research into Ofsted and its impact, (for example, Avinson et al, 2008; Baxter, 2014a; Chapman, 2001; Courtney, 2014; Cullingford, 1999; Ehren et al, 2015; Jeffrey and Woods, 1998; Matthews and Sammons, 2004; Perryman, 2007) there has been relatively little written about the teaching criteria (Gilroy and Wilcox, 1997) so that these findings will contribute to new knowledge in this area.

In order to understand how the criteria were initially developed, the research included an historical overview of the origin of school inspections in England and the influential role of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) of schools (Bolton, 2014; Dunford, 1998; Lawton and Gordon, 1987; Lee and Fitz, 1997; Smith, 2000). The factors, such as government policies and educational research, that may have influenced Ofsted's teaching criteria over the years, were explored in the literature review and in the interviews with HMI who were in post when Ofsted was established in 1992 as well as in more recent years. Interviews with 10 primary school headteachers and with teachers from their schools (nine pairs and one solo) were undertaken to learn about their perceptions of the criteria and how they use them in their schools.

The methodology is based on a constructionist ontology and interpretive epistemology (Cohen et al, 2007). I opted for a qualitative approach (Tesch, 1990),

employing semi-structured interviews in order to get first-hand detailed accounts of how some key actors perceive and use the teaching criteria. The research was inspired by my own experience as a former HMI (from 1991 to 2000) and current Ofsted additional inspector and education consultant working with schools in an advisory capacity. I drew on my own experience, but was also very aware of my positionality as a former HMI and practising inspector and the need for reflexivity, particularly in relation to the research interviews and the analysis of data (Burke, 2012; Wacquant, 1989). The research revealed the significance of performativity as teachers and headteachers seek to manage an Ofsted inspection and achieve the best outcome. There has been a great deal of research about performativity and Ofsted, with Foucauldian interpretations in relation to power and the Panopticon (for example, Ball, 2003; Jeffrey, 2002; Lo, 2011; Osgood, 2006; Perryman, 2006; Troman et al, 2007). Less emphasis has been given to a Bourdieuan reflection in this area, and so to bring a fresh perspective I applied Bourdieu's thinking tools of habitus and field (Jenkins, 2002) to the roles of headteachers, additional inspectors and HMI in what I have called the 'field of inspection'. I found that other Bourdieu concepts, such as 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) and 'misrecognition' (Swartz, 1997), also had synergy with some of my research findings and so have applied these, where relevant. I have used the term 'institutional habitus', although am aware of the controversy around this term, which was not used by Bourdieu (Atkinson, 2011; 2013). Bourdieu mainly used the term habitus when referring to social class (Bourdieu, 1984; Reay, 1995), which was outside the remit of my research, and I am aware that the application of habitus to education is not without its critics (for example, Nash, 1990).

The historical review, interviews and data analysis were carried out to find answers to the following research questions:

- How have Ofsted's criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching changed since 1993 (when Ofsted inspections first started)?
- What have been the key policy drivers and other influences on the teaching criteria?

- How do ten primary headteachers view the Ofsted criteria and use them to influence classroom practice in their schools?
- How do primary teachers from the headteachers' schools view the Ofsted criteria and use them to influence their own classroom practice?

7.2 How have Ofsted's criteria for evaluating and grading teaching changed over the years and what have been the key policy drivers and other influences?

School inspections have been a feature of education in England since the first two HMI were appointed in 1839. Since that time the number of HMI and their role increased until the late 1980s when there were over 450. HMIs' role included inspections of schools and other education establishments and offering advice to ministers (Bolton, 1998; Dunford, 1998). As there were relatively few HMI, schools were inspected infrequently and the reports, which took months to be completed, were not initially made available to the public. As education became a higher national priority, spurred on by Jim Callaghan's 1976 Ruskin College speech (Callaghan, 1976), the impact of HMI was increasingly challenged and considered by some Conservative ministers such as Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education between 1986 and 1989, to be 'consecrating the profanity of progressive education' (Lee and Fitz (1997: 45-46), a view currently shared by Civitas (Peal, 2014). This view of HMI as promoters of child-centred and 'progressive' teaching pedagogy and philosophy was challenged in the early days (Fitz, 1997) and vehemently denied by the current chief inspector, HMCI, Sir Michael Wilshaw (2014a).

Ofsted was established out of political desire to make schools more accountable to the public and parents (Smith, 2000), and to raise standards by more regular inspections of schools, with published reports. HMI survived and were retained, albeit in much reduced numbers (less than 200) (Bolton, 1998; Maclure, 1998), in the new non-ministerial department enshrined in the 1992 Education Act (DES, 1992) as the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (OHMCI), which came to be

called Ofsted. Ofsted was tasked with inspecting all schools every four to six years and to do this needed to train and assess thousands of independent inspectors (non-HMI) for roles as registered, team and lay inspectors (as defined, DES,1992).

Prior to Ofsted, there were no published criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching. HMI relied on their 'interpretative community' (Fish, 1980) to establish their common view of best practice and did not have written guidance and criteria. HMI had produced several publications, such as *Curriculum Matters* (DES, 1984 and 1985) and *Primary Education in England* (DES, 1978), which drew on HMI inspection evidence to describe good practice in teaching and learning (Lee and Fitz, 1997). These early documents formed the basis for the first sets of Ofsted criteria, rather than any particular educational research, though a review of research into school effectiveness, requested by Ofsted, was published in 1995 (Sammons et al, 1995), one year after the first Ofsted primary school inspections. It seems clear, and this is supported by the HMI interviewees, that the first teaching criteria for Ofsted inspections were based on the views of HMI who, as John³³ said, 'were experienced inspectors who had been inspecting schools... for the past 150 years'.

HMI realised that in order to train this large cohort of new inspectors they could no longer rely on their 'interpretative community' and needed to prepare written criteria and guidance. The first handbooks for inspection were prepared in a matter of months (Lee and Fitz,1997). Former HMI interviewee, Margaret, described the pressure they were under to prepare the materials and how she and an HMI colleague wrote the training materials in a room adjacent to that of a small team of HMI who were developing the criteria at the same time. It was all written in haste in order to be ready for inspections from September 1993 (for secondary schools) with primary and special schools a year later (Maw, 1995). Despite the haste, the first handbooks for inspection were generally well received and provided schools with, perhaps for the first time, a set of criteria and guidance by which they would be judged by inspectors (Matthews and Sammons, 2004; Woodhead, 2002).

³³ Pseudonyms are used for all of the interviewees.

The influence of HMI and particularly HMCI (Maw, 1998) has been a constant feature of Ofsted. In Bourdieuan terms, HMI wield considerable symbolic capital in the field of inspection, which affords them authority, respect and importance in the eyes of schools. Headteachers and teachers often consider HMI to be 'better' inspectors than non-HMI (additional inspectors) (Waldegrave and Simons, 2014: 37); a view that is probably not borne out in practice (HOC, 2011). HMIs' symbolic capital is manifest in their authorship of the inspection guidance: they write the 'rules of the game', the criteria. This is particularly relevant because the criteria have changed many times since the first primary school inspections and they are open to interpretation, as confirmed in all of the headteacher and teacher interviews. Teachers' views of the apparent superiority of HMI over additional inspectors may reflect a belief that HMI are nearer to the source of power and knowledge (of how to interpret the criteria). Some headteachers I interviewed also said that they preferred to be inspected by HMI, and Hugh, whose school had been judged as 'requires improvement' when inspected in 2013, was positive about a recent HMI monitoring visit (Ofsted, 2015b), which he described as 'more of a supportive agenda'.

Ofsted's chief inspector, HMCI, has the most symbolic capital and his/ her authority is enshrined in law through the Education Acts (DES, 1992, and DfES, 2005, for example). The HMI interviewees commented on the impact and authority of HMCI, for example, Robert said, 'because in the end everything we do is in the Chief Inspector's name and in the power invested in the Chief Inspector'. HMCI are appointed by the Crown on recommendation of the Secretary of State for Education (Parliament, 2011), and could therefore be considered as political appointments. The eight HMCI (including two in an acting position) since 1992 have exerted their considerable power in different ways. None seem to have captured the public's attention as much as Chris Woodhead (1994 to 2000), who sadly passed away this year (2015), and the current incumbent Sir Michael Wilshaw, in post since January 2012. These two HMCI have perhaps been more forthright than other HMCI in expressing their views about education. A former HMI

I interviewed, John, suggests that other HMCI were probably preoccupied with the 'acquisition of more and more inspection responsibilities for Ofsted, and ... the seemingly incessant structural reorganisations within Ofsted'.

Sir Michael Wilshaw has made a number of public statements (for example, Wilshaw, 2012, 2013, 2014a) and these, along with changes to the inspection framework, have proved to be very unpopular with the unions in particular (for example, ATL, 2012; Hobby, 2015). The most significant changes instigated by Wilshaw have been the replacement of the 'satisfactory' judgement with 'requires improvement' and the insistence that to be judged outstanding overall, a school must be judged to have outstanding teaching. These changes were compounded by the Coalition Government's focus on the importance of teaching (DfE, 2010a), which resulted in a reduction in the number of areas to be inspected and reported on to just four from 2012 onwards (Ofsted, 2012a), which exposed the quality of teaching in a way that was less evident in previous inspection frameworks. It highlighted the significance of inspectors' observation of lessons, which has been the focus on much criticism (for example, Bassey, 2014; Waldegrave and Simons, 2014). The criticisms relate to perceived inconsistencies in inspectors' judgements and the accusation that additional inspectors are out of touch and not qualified to inspect. There has been a call for more current practitioners to be inspectors because of their perceived greater credibility (HOC, 2011). This view is shared by Sir Michael Wilshaw, a former headteacher, whose aim for at least 70% of inspectors to be practising senior leaders has been achieved following the application and assessment process to bring inspectors (to be called Ofsted inspectors) directly under the management of Ofsted; less than 30% were practitioners prior to September 2015. However, the deployment of practitioners as inspectors is not without its problems as identified by Baxter (2013) and whether these headteacher inspectors will have enough time to devote to inspection has yet to be seen. Interviewee John recalled Ofsted's additional inspector project in the late 1990s, when primary headteachers were seconded to Ofsted to be trained as inspectors. These headteachers worked in small teams led by HMI (of which I was one) to be trained as inspectors through a mixture of face-to-face and on-the-

inspection training. I recall this as one of my most challenging yet enjoyable times in the Inspectorate and that the headteachers in my team brought with them a great deal of 'baggage', that is views based on their own (often limited) experience; this idea of inspectors' 'baggage' was reported by Millett and Johnson (1998). Headteacher Sarah referred to inspectors having their 'pet things'. Liz, Bindu and Hugh spoke about inspectors having preferred approaches to teaching early years' children, which would be a worthy topic for further research as I have experienced this myself as a lead inspector.

Ofsted has been very responsive to criticism throughout its 23-year tenure and has changed its frameworks, criteria and guidance many times, partly as a result. For example, the greater involvement of headteachers in inspection and significance given to schools' self-evaluation was a direct response to early criticisms (for example, in Cullingford, 1999; Matthews and Smith, 1995). Lay inspectors are no longer deployed on inspection teams (Wilshaw, 2014a). The current HMCI, Sir Michael Wilshaw, has gone out of his way to respond to the critics of lesson observations and the Civitas claim (Peal, 2014) that Ofsted promotes a progressive teaching ideology, by instructing lead inspectors to avoid suggesting that Ofsted has a preferred teaching style. He has promoted the idea that teaching is judged over time rather than simply based on lesson observations and, significantly, has removed the requirement that inspectors grade the quality of teaching when they observe lessons; these changes were welcomed by all of my headteacher and teacher interviewees. Ofsted has recruited more practising headteachers as inspectors and brought back inspections under Ofsted (rather than through inspection service providers (ISPs) (Baxter and Clarke, 2013), because, he said, that inspection is 'just too important for Ofsted to simply have oversight of third-party arrangements' (Wilshaw, 2014a).

There are a number of possible interpretations and implications arising from the way that Ofsted has responded to criticism. The importance of the position of HMCI and his/her capacity to influence practice so directly and so swiftly exemplify its superior symbolic capital in the field of inspection. The escalating criticisms of

Ofsted since 2012 suggest that the framework changes have not been welcomed and that inspection outcomes have assumed increasing significance for schools in terms of status, public reputation and impact on school roll and possible headteacher replacement. The significance of inspection has been exacerbated by the Coalition and now Conservative Government policies to turn schools into academies, removed from local authority control and led by an academy trust, based on their Ofsted inspection outcome. This possibility has been reinforced by the Education and Adoption Bill (DfE, 2015) going through parliament (July 2015), which gives the government power to force a wider range of schools to become academies. Another implication is that although some of the initiatives brought in by Sir Michael Wilshaw and plans for the future are welcomed by schools and unions (Lightman, 2015), they still amount to changes and new versions of the handbooks. There have been four handbooks since January 2012, with many minor amendments in between, and a further version for September 2015. Schools find it hard to keep up with the changes, in what Courtney (2014: 12) refers to as 'post-panoptic regime [where] the fabrication must be continually destabilised to betray the players' ignorance of the rules'. I consider that these frequent changes to the criteria, which schools and inspectors have to come to terms with, amount to what Bourdieu calls 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Reay, 1995). I think that the term symbolic violence has particular relevance in relation to additional inspectors who, since 2012, have been subjected to sometimes weekly instructions from the ISPs about what to include and not to include in inspection reports. This has culminated in the cruel headlines about 'purging' or 'culling' of inspectors' (Richardson, 2015) following the assessments to be part of the new Ofsted-led inspection regime. The outcomes of the 60-minute on-line assessment and further two days training and assessment have resulted in 40% not 'passing', leading to the inevitable response from unions and schools about the quality of these 'sacked' inspectors' previous reports. There have been hundreds of freedom of information (FOI) requests for names of these 'sacked' inspectors and schools they have inspected (Vaughan, 2015a). Ofsted's response to such FOI requests has been that to provide the information requested would 'contravene every aspect

of the first data protection principle' and therefore cannot provide it (Ofsted, 2015n).

What constitutes the 'criteria' for evaluating the quality of teaching is not totally clear. The earliest handbooks included 'evaluation criteria' followed by a list of features that 'the quality of teaching had to be judged against, for example, 'the extent to which teachers have clear objectives for their lessons' (Ofsted, 1994a). A Wittgensteinian interpretation of Ofsted's teaching criteria (Gilroy and Wilcox, 1997) would define them as 'conventional', that is agreed by convention and general usage and open to interpretation (Richards, 2001b and 2015). All my school interviewees commented on the vagueness of the criteria and how they are open to interpretation as well as to frequent change.

The 'criteria' have changed in format over the years. They were supported by detailed guidance in the inspection handbooks up to 2003. In addition, Ofsted published further guidance that exemplified the criteria and illustrated what HMI considered to be 'good' and 'poor' teaching in all curriculum subjects (for example, Ofsted, 2000d). Ofsted's annual reports also highlighted examples of good and poor teaching. There are many Ofsted publications that illustrate case studies of good practice, including for example, outcomes of subject surveys, particularly for English and mathematics (such as Ofsted, 2012d and 2012f), and guidance on how Ofsted inspects subjects (with subject-specific teaching criteria, such as Ofsted, 2012g). This publication of guidance on good teaching represents another (or perhaps the main) Ofsted dilemma— is Ofsted about school improvement (as stated in the original strapline) or regulation? Can it be both? My HMI interviewees commented on this Ofsted dilemma and that whether to give advice or not has been an issue for HMI from the start of Ofsted. Production of the subject guidance and case studies gives the impression that Ofsted is about school improvement, but Sir Michael Wilshaw has stated that Ofsted does not have a preferred teaching style (Wilshaw, 2014a). HMI Robert explained the dilemma as putting Ofsted in a:

kind of a curious position where, for example, research might tell us that some children might learn best whilst working independently, whereas if we were seen to be promoting independent learning as such, and this is part of the live debate, then that might be seen to be promoting independent learning over and above another form of organisation of teaching...

The HMIs I interviewed suggested that the teaching criteria had probably been 'least affected' by government policy or changes in government; as Susan said, 'that's because it is really about something that's outside their field, their understanding'. It is clear that government policies have driven changes to the inspection frameworks (which set out how inspections should be carried out, the notice given to school, the subjects and aspects reported on). Until 2005, inspections generally lasted for four or five days and included several inspectors (up to 15 in the case of secondary schools) who looked at and reported on all National Curriculum subjects. Inspectors were tasked with reporting on the implementation of the National Curriculum and on government initiatives such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies (DfE, 2011d). The teaching of literacy and numeracy became part of the Ofsted teaching criteria from 2000 onwards (Ofsted, 2000a). The teaching of phonics became a political issue (Wyse and Styles, 2007) and was included in the teaching criteria guidance from 2000. Phonics assumed even greater importance after the phonics screening check for six year olds (Year 1) was introduced in 2012, because it was used to inform the inspectors' judgement on pupils' attainment and on the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics (Ofsted, 2015a).

The Labour Government's *Every Child Matters* (DFES, 2004) was incorporated into the inspection framework, with the quality of teaching one of over 20 areas that were inspected and reported (Ofsted, 2009a). The Coalition Government of 2010 introduced the term 'pupil premium' and those eligible pupils became a group that was included in the teaching criteria from 2012 onwards. Several teacher interviewees considered that the government had persuaded Ofsted to 'raise the

bar' because of concerns about performance of English schools in international tests, such as PISA. The teaching criteria included a new group– 'the most able'– possibly in response to this drive to raise standards (Ofsted, 2013c). Apart from these politically driven issues, the broad features of the teaching criteria have not changed much in over 20 years. These common features include: teachers' high expectations; good subject and curriculum knowledge; well-planned lessons that cater for pupils' different needs; good deployment of other adults (such as teaching assistants); management of behaviour; effective assessment for learning including marking; using a range of teaching activities that engage and motivate pupils. Although Ofsted has not justified its teaching criteria in terms of educational research, there is synergy between the components of the criteria and current research into effective teaching (for example, Coe et al, 2015; Husbands and Pearce, 2012). HMI Robert suggested that Ofsted now makes much greater use of research and another senior HMI explained how Ofsted consulted academics for advice on how to undertake a statistically valid survey into the consistency of inspector judgements under the new short inspections planned for September 2015. Margaret and John described a number of visits to other countries to explore their approaches to inspection, but said that this did not have much impact on the teaching criteria. Ofsted is also an active member of the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (van Bruggen, 2010).

Although the broad areas of the teaching criteria have remained more or less the same over the years, the wording and format for the teaching criteria have changed in each of the 11 iterations of the handbook (or schedule as it was sometimes called) since 1993. Sometimes the changes are minor and it is not clear why these cosmetic changes were made as Ofsted offered no explanation. Ofsted did not justify its teaching criteria until 2012 when it was stated that they were linked to the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011a). I disagree with Courtney (2014) who asserts that the constant changes (to the handbooks) are a deliberate attempt by Ofsted to retain control and power over schools. My interpretation, based on my own experience and interviews with HMI, is that the criteria were probably written by different groups of HMI each with their own preference for

language. I think that this is an illustration of Ofsted's 'misrecognition' of the impact of the changes on schools and additional inspectors who have to interpret them, rather than a deliberate act to impose control and to undermine headteachers.

2005 was a turning point in inspection history as the grading scale changed from seven to four and the amount of time spent on inspection was reduced to two days. From then on, inspections of primary schools focussed on English and mathematics. Significantly, the inspection guidance included descriptors for each of the four grades. The criteria for the quality of teaching were linked more explicitly than in earlier handbooks to pupils' progress. Positive facets of 2005 inspections were the inclusion of headteachers and senior leaders more closely in the inspection (for example, undertaking joint lesson observations with inspectors), which some of my headteacher interviewees commented on, and the weight given to school's own self-evaluation.

From the outset, it was clear that the quality of teaching would be judged first and foremost by inspectors observing lessons. This was evident from the inspection guidance which specified what inspectors should expect to see in lessons. The focus on lesson observations continued strongly for the first 10 years. Inspectors continued to give grades for the overall quality of a lesson until 2009 and teams totted up the numbers of lessons graded 1, 2, 3, and 4³⁴. After 2009, inspectors were expected to award grades for the quality of teaching, learning and behaviour in observed lessons but not give a grade for 'the lesson' and were therefore not supposed to feedback to teachers by saying 'your lesson was good, etc'. This subtle distinction between the grade for a lesson and for the quality of teaching seems to have been lost on teachers and probably on inspectors as well, who were still giving lesson grades during feedback to teachers until as recently as 2013, according to several of my interviewees. In the meantime, a whole money-making industry has developed to offer training and books on how to deliver an outstanding lesson (Peal, 2014). Interviewee, former HMI Susan, said that she thought that the pre-2012 inspection framework 'very much led teachers down the line of needing

³⁴ Where 1 = outstanding, 2= good, 3= satisfactory/ requires improvement and 4= inadequate.

Ofsted's checklists— an outstanding Ofsted lesson is...'. In many schools, this has resulted in performativity on the part of teachers and their senior leaders as they strive to be well prepared for an inspection. A whole set of myths grew up around what inspectors look for in lessons, based on schools' misinterpretation of the criteria in their desire to get on top of 'the game' (Ofsted, 2013d). Ofsted has attempted to dispel the myths (Ofsted, 2014d), but has retained the importance of lesson observations (ungraded) in the handbook for September 2015.

The decision to provide descriptions of each teaching grade although potentially helpful to schools and inspectors has not been without its problems. The criteria are broad and open to interpretation. Distinguishing between 'outstanding' and 'good' teaching becomes a matter of degree (for example, 'high' as opposed to 'consistently high' expectations), resulting in statements that are often impossible to be realised in practice (Richards, 2014). As headteacher Helen said, 'I think the difference between good and outstanding is minimal, so how on earth do they judge someone good or someone outstanding?'. The grade now called 'requires improvement' (RI) has been assigned no descriptor, as it simply says 'is not good'. Although several teacher interviewees dislike the term RI and lack of description, as an inspector I find the latter helpful because it reduces the number of descriptors to consider as one simply needs to decide between 'inadequate' and 'good' (if it is clearly not outstanding). Inadequate teaching is defined very precisely as where 'any of the following apply' teaching is 'likely to be inadequate' (for example, Ofsted, 2012b: 35)', although the statements that follow are not unequivocal, for example, 'pupils cannot communicate, read, write, or apply mathematics as well as they should' (Ofsted, 2015a: 61). The difficulty of interpreting the grade descriptors is probably one of the main causes of inconsistency, which is of such concern to schools. Although having grade descriptors seemed a positive development in 2005, ten years on I believe that the grades are now probably a major source of schools' concerns and criticisms. The grades carry so much weight and significance for schools in terms of the outcome (such as failing, being academised or losing outstanding status), that the

vagueness of the language and openness to interpretation are being challenged much more robustly (Richards, 2015; Hobby, 2015).

It was not the purpose of this research to investigate whether Ofsted has been successful in achieving its aim of 'improvement through inspection'. My focus has been on how Ofsted evaluates the quality of teaching, which is such an important, if not the most important, factor in raising pupils' standards (for example, Chetty et al, 2011; DfE, 2010a; Rowe, 2004; and Slater et al, 2009). A comparison of Ofsted's data for the proportion of good or better teaching over the years shows that in 1994/ 5, the first year of primary inspections, 40% of primary school lessons observed were judged good or better with 19% unsatisfactory or worse. In the 2004/5 school year, 74% of primary schools were judged to have good or better teaching, with 3% unsatisfactory or worse (although the criteria changed in between). By 2013/ 14 the proportion of schools with good or outstanding teaching rose to 82%, with 2% inadequate. Of course the grading scales and criteria changed, but most teachers I interviewed believe it has become more rather than less difficult to attain a good rating, so using Ofsted's own benchmarks, this suggests significant improvement in teaching in 20 years. The many studies into the impact of inspection on school effectiveness have not been conclusive. Barber (2004) stated that, 'Ofsted has been a huge influence on the system. In my view it has probably been the single biggest lever in improving the system over that decade', which is a grand claim. Jones and Tymms (2014: 328) are less convinced and suggest that 'there is a lack of evidence from strong research designs to assess the impact of inspections and the assumption that there is a causal link between inspections and school improvement cannot be clearly supported from the literature'. A three-year study that involved research into the impact of inspection in eight European countries concluded:

There is evidence to indicate that school inspections can be a key feature of school improvement but more recent studies point to unintended consequences such as excessive bureaucracy and teaching to the test.

Good measures and methods of school inspections are therefore crucial in promoting quality within schools. (Ehren et al, 2015)

Clearly more research is needed in this area and I would particularly be interested in looking at the impact of inspections on teaching pedagogy, to take this research to the next level, with more in-depth studies in one or two case study schools. In my experience of over 20 years inspecting and observing lessons, what I see in primary classrooms today is consistently better than the majority of what I observed in the early 1990s, but then on what criteria am I basing that assertion?

7.3 How do ten primary headteachers view the Ofsted criteria and use them to influence classroom practice in their schools?

I interviewed 10 headteachers or, in two cases, deputy headteachers who were acting headteachers. In one school, two senior leaders shared the role and I spoke to them together. It was apparent from all of these headteachers' responses that they share a common attitude and disposition towards inspections, an 'institutional habitus' (Reay, 1998) that cuts across schools and their teaching and leadership experience. They want the best for their schools and pupils and understand the importance of a good inspection outcome (resulting in increased symbolic capital for themselves and their schools). All of the headteachers described how they try to keep up to date with Ofsted changes and use Ofsted's criteria to inform their own practice, particularly their observations of lessons and other aspects of teaching. Performativity was evident in the way that interviewees described how they respond to Ofsted developments. For example, several headteachers spoke about the increased inspection focus on pupils' work and teachers' marking and how they have incorporated this into their own monitoring. As headteacher Bindu said: 'I think sometimes teachers mark for Ofsted'.

All of the headteachers have adopted their own rigorous monitoring regimes that draw on Ofsted's criteria for the quality of teaching, adapted to suit their schools, reflecting their different enactments of national policy at the local, school level

(Braun et al, 2012). The monitoring involves headteachers in activities that often mirror what inspectors do, such as lesson observations and book scrutinies, illustrating their performativity. The headteachers said that they monitor for performance management, but also to ensure that they have information for Ofsted when inspected; they are aware that Ofsted inspectors judge their leadership and management by how well they manage and improve the quality of teaching.

The headteachers operate in the field of inspection and try to understand the rules of the Ofsted 'game'. As most of them indicated, the problem is that the rules (i.e. the criteria) keep changing and are open to different interpretations, translations and enactments (Braun et al, 2012). They recognise the importance of playing the game, by preparing for an inspection, with resulting performativity and fabrication (Ball, 2003). The headteachers clearly intend to concentrate (but not exclusively) on what they will be judged/ inspected on (Muijs and Chapman, 2009). Ofsted has recently criticised headteachers for employing consultants to help them prepare for inspections and for mock-Ofsted's (Wilshaw, 2014a). I believe that this is another example of Ofsted's 'misrecognition' (Swartz, 1997: 43) of the impact of Ofsted outcomes for schools. Since 2012, Ofsted outcomes have become even more significant for schools, as the threat of academisation is linked to them, and they can result in headteachers losing their jobs (Lepkowska, 2014). Inspections are also stressful for schools (Chapman, 2002; de Wolf and Janssens, 2007; Perryman, 2007), but if headteachers and teachers know what is expected and are prepared for what will happen, then surely they are likely to feel more confident. But Wilshaw does not want schools to prepare for Ofsted. Even though HMI have been teachers and senior leaders themselves, as Robert reminded me, once inside the 'Ofsted camp' it seems harder for them to empathise fully with schools.

Ofsted has recently declared that it will ban the newly recruited 'Ofsted inspectors'³⁵ from undertaking mock inspections in schools (Garner, 2015b). The newspaper headlines describe this as 'moonlighting', which is misleading and

³⁵ Additional inspectors who will be contracted by Ofsted to inspect schools, but are not full-time employees or HMI.

inaccurate as the inspectors will not be full time Ofsted employees and will only undertake inspections on a contractual basis. The inspectors will be freelance consultants who rely on other work, including Ofsted style reviews of schools, to make a living. I believe that this harsh approach to inspectors is another example of Ofsted's symbolic violence towards them and reflects additional inspectors' lowly position in the inspection field and difficulty of responding because of the possible impact on their economic capital.

The headteachers I interviewed were encouraged by recent changes to the inspection of teaching, particularly the idea of 'teaching over time' and not grading lessons, which they are attempting to implement in their own schools. Headteacher Ann said: 'It's gone from what does the teacher do. Do they do a lovely performance, to what are the children getting from this? How has the teacher impacted on the children?' A few interviewees commented positively on their greater involvement in the inspection through joint observations and sitting in meetings of the inspection team. They recognise and accept the increased focus on pupils' progress and on different groups of pupils (such as those eligible for the pupil premium). They were mostly positive about the way that their most recent inspection had been conducted, as Helen said, 'as stressful as Ofsted[sic] are, it was a really positive team. I got a sense that they knew ... and they just they wanted us to be a good school'. Some interviewees spoke about their less positive previous inspections or hearing about experiences of other headteachers in their local networks.

Inconsistencies in the quality and approach of inspection teams are these headteachers' biggest concern and several interviewees suggested that the overall effectiveness inspection judgement is dependent on who leads the team. Some linked this view about the importance of the lead inspector to what they perceive as the increasingly strong link between performance data and the quality of teaching. Several of the headteachers I interviewed believe that lead inspectors make their decision about the overall effectiveness judgement before setting foot in the school, as Sarah said, 'judgements have been made pretty much before anybody's

entered the building and that's literally on the public data, the RAISEonline data, the last set of key test results', a finding also put forward by Waldegrave and Pearce (2014). This seemingly over-reliance on performance data in Ofsted inspections has been raised for some years (Baxter and Clarke, 2013; NFER, 2009; Ozga, 2009; Stewart, 2015). The headteachers I interviewed also suggested that there is now a very strong link between the teaching and achievement judgements (grades), because of the premise that there is an explicit link between the teaching criteria and pupils' progress. This view seems borne out by a scrutiny of 100 inspection reports (Watchsted, 2015) where the inspection grades for achievement and the quality of teaching were identical. What is not so public, and may provide an explanation for the apparent similarity between teaching and achievement inspection grades, is the advice that lead inspectors have received from ISPs; judgements are likely to be challenged by quality assurance readers if they seem to contradict the RAISEonline data.

Ofsted has responded to the criticism about over-reliance on past data and the link between teaching and progress. HMI have commented publicly that some inspectors rely too much on published performance data (Harford, 2014; Roberts, 2015). In response, the handbook for September 2015 (Ofsted, 2015k: 54) states that in judging achievement, inspectors will give 'most weight to the progress of pupils currently in the school (my underlining)', which is a significant change. Also, the teaching³⁶ criteria (Ofsted, 2015k: 44) no longer start with a statement about the link between teaching and progress. The sections on teaching in previous inspection handbooks have invariably opened with a phrase linking teaching and pupils' achievements. For example, the current handbook's section on the quality of teaching (Ofsted, 2015a: 57) begins with: 'The most important role of teaching is to promote learning and the acquisition of knowledge by pupils and to raise achievement'. Therefore, the September 2015 handbook criteria represent a radical change for the inspection of teaching and seem to be a direct response to the recent concerns raised by schools and unions.

³⁶ Now teaching, learning and assessment rather than just teaching (Ofsted, 2015k)

The concerns about inconsistency of inspections and inspectors raised by headteachers (and referred to earlier in this chapter), has also been the subject of much public criticism (Bousted, 2014; Hobby, 2015; Peal, 2014; Waldegrave and Simons, 2014). Ofsted has acknowledged this potential issue and responded in a number of ways. By bringing inspections back in-house, HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw has explained (Wilshaw, 2015) that this will make it easier to ensure consistency; Ofsted inspectors will work closely with HMI who will monitor their performance. Inspectors had to reapply to work under the new Ofsted arrangements and the subsequent assessment resulted in around 40% applicants not 'passing' or being 'culled' as the headlines portrayed it (Richardson, 2015). In addition, Ofsted is planning to undertake some inspections where it can test the reliability of different lead inspectors' judgements. The process was explained to me by a senior HMI who said that it would only involve one extra HMI on the team who would independently arrive at judgements on the new short inspections for good schools (Ofsted, 2015l). This seems to me to be a sensible approach but it has met with negative headlines, and has been misrepresented as having two inspections at the same time, reflecting the current anti-Ofsted public feeling, and referred to as a 'disgrace' (Garner, 2015a).

I found it surprising that most of the headteachers do not believe that their professionalism or autonomy are undermined by having Ofsted criteria. Their response may reflect their perception of my positionality (what they thought I wanted them to say), or the fact that I did not attempt to define either term, or that they are demonstrating their post-performativity (Wilkins, 2011) or post-panopticism (Courtney, 2014), because most have spent all their teaching and leadership years in the 'Ofsted era'. Their institutional (or institutionalised) habitus may have been fashioned by an unconscious acceptance of the inevitable in the field of inspection. Thompson (2010: 6) suggests, drawing on Bourdieu, that headteachers' dispositions predispose them to 'press for more authority'. It may be that the headteachers I spoke to were successfully pressing for more authority in the way that they were attempting to take control of Ofsted inspections by understanding the 'rules' and keeping abreast of the many changes. One of the headteachers was

also an Ofsted additional inspector and found the experience of participating as an inspector illuminating as she was closer to the 'source of the Ofsted intelligence' (my words). I expect that many headteachers who sign up to become Ofsted inspectors do so for this reason, for professional development and learning more about the rules of the game – rather than to inspect per se, a view alluded to by Baxter (2013). Baxter (2014a) also suggests other possible concerns and paradoxes about headteachers as inspectors, for example about impartiality. Given that Ofsted's aim is for three-quarters of Ofsted inspectors to be practitioners, the significance of this initiative and whether it will appease the unions will become more apparent in the next few years.

7.4 How do primary teachers from the headteachers' schools view the Ofsted criteria and use them to influence their own classroom practice?

The interviews with the teachers were in many ways more revealing than with the headteachers and confirmed Blunsdon's (2002) finding that teachers feel the effects of inspection more than their senior leaders. This may be because inspection impacts directly on their everyday practice and their relationship with their pupils, particularly in a primary school where a teacher will spend most of the day with his/ her class. This also reflects their lowly position in the field of inspection. They have relatively little symbolic capital in the field of inspection and are further from the source of the rules, yet are expected to implement them and be held accountable for their successful enactment.

Most of the teachers suggested that Ofsted's criteria are necessary. Kylie said that 'the criteria give you something to aspire to', and Simon said, 'you have to have a level playing field'. The teachers were mainly positive about their most recent inspection, but what was clearly an important factor in this was how the inspectors related to them and whether they received positive feedback after an observation. The interviewees spoke about how significant an inspection outcome is for their school and described, as Yasmine said, the pressure 'about letting people down' if

they had a poor observation during an inspection. Most interviewees, but not all, spoke about how stressful they find inspections and a few, such as Caroline and Yasmine admitted that they find this pressure very hard to take. Kylie summed it up: 'It's all about Ofsted isn't it? What will Ofsted want? And everything revolves around that'.

Most of the interviewees said that they appreciate some of the changes to the teaching criteria, such as the greater focus on pupils and 'teaching over time', rather than the teaching performance, although they are not confident that, as Wilma said, that inspectors would consider teaching 'outstanding... if they [pupils] are reading [when observed]'. Their performativity appears to be embedded. Their institutional habitus includes a blend of unconscious and conscious performativity; their schools are performative institutions (Jeffrey and Troman, 2012). Teachers are doing things simply because they believe it will help them attain a good Ofsted outcome, rather than because they believe it to be appropriate.

The teachers I interviewed do not seem to make much use of Ofsted's teaching criteria in their day to day work, but are conscious that their senior leaders draw on them to prepare lesson observation criteria and to grade lessons, although this practice is on the decline. Until they are inspected, the criteria are something that the teachers leave for their senior leaders. They just get on with teaching. They accept accountability as part of their lives and appear to demonstrate what Troman (2008: 630) referred to as 'complex identities in order to deal with the new and uncertain roles within rapid social, cultural and economic changes...'. They also demonstrated Gu and Day's (2006) idea of resilience in their eagerness in many cases to reassure me that despite concerns about being inspected and constantly monitored 'they're happy being teachers still' (Caroline). When asked about the impact on their autonomy and professionalism, they generally responded that these were only affected when they are observed, when most of them would change what they do, becoming more cautious and less inclined to, as Alicia said, 're-enact the Battle of Waterloo'.

Most of the teachers' schools are in areas of high social disadvantage, and some teachers felt that the school's context and the day to day issues that they have to contend with are not recognised enough by Ofsted. Paula commented that the criteria 'do not take into account the fact that the child's come in that day and had no sleep that night'. A few interviewees, such as Kylie, spoke positively about the way that the inspection criteria highlight the importance of different groups of pupils, such as those eligible for the pupil premium (which they recognized as a government influence) and those with special educational needs. However, they suggested that the criteria are unrealistic as they do not take into account differences between individual pupils and the impossibility that all (or even most) pupils can make 'rapid and sustained progress' (Ofsted, 2012a: 34-35), a phrase which a few of them said was unrealistic.

Several of the teachers believe that Ofsted and its criteria are influenced by government policies. Caroline said, 'I think because it all comes from above [government]. Any policy is going to influence the criteria, what we can do, what Ofsted is going to mark us, assess us on'. Some teachers suggested that there is collusion between Ofsted and the government to fail schools so that they could be academised. They spoke about the government's focus on standards and international comparisons and feel that this has influenced Ofsted, to 'raise the bar'; they believe that it is more difficult to get a good grade now than in the past – a view shared by Sir Michael Wilshaw (2013). The teachers' views about being given lesson or teaching grades varied, with some wanting them 'to know where you stand' (Martha), but others preferring simply to be told strengths and weaknesses.

The teachers' position at the bottom of the field of inspection in terms of their symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) was evident. They lack power but are subject to the most scrutiny. Their personal space (the classroom) is invaded by being monitored so frequently by their senior leaders and during Ofsted inspections. Anticipation of inspection creates stress (Perryman, 2007) and probably comes

from their senior leaders for whom the Ofsted outcome is more significant in many ways.

7.5. Research limitations and further research possibilities

In taking a reflexive approach to this research, which as Grenfell (2012: 224) indicates is a 'vital ingredient' in Bourdieu's work and is an 'epistemological necessity', I was conscious of both my positionality and the limitations of the research. My choice of interviewees immediately introduced limitations. It would have been beneficial to speak to a wider range of HMI, including those specifically involved in changing the inspection criteria at key points, such as prior to 2005.

I selected the schools where I interviewed headteachers and teachers. As some of the headteachers and a few teachers knew me prior to the interview, this may have influenced their responses. As I mention in Chapter 5, most teachers and headteachers were probably aware that I was an 'Ofsted inspector', which may have made them less inclined to be really honest so as not to 'lose face' (Goffman, 1959).

I was not aiming to include a representative sample of schools, but most were located in London in challenging contexts and this immediately introduced a limitation on the data. I deliberately chose not to interview headteachers of schools in special measures as there has been a reasonable amount of research into the impact of inspections on these schools (for example, Perryman 2002 and 2005), but again this limited my findings and could represent an area for further research.

Despite the suggested limitations above, I believe that the approach was very successful in many respects. The interviews were informative as interviewees opened up and provided me with some useful data that helped me to answer the research questions. I undertook 24 interviews which was time-consuming but rewarding. I appreciated how interviewees had often prepared for the interviews, suggesting that the reflexive collaboration approach (Burke, 2012), sending

questions beforehand, for example, was beneficial. I believe that, in view of the richness of my data, I was justified in focusing on interviews, which as Kvale (2007: 400) says are an 'exciting way of doing strong and valuable research', rather than questionnaires. I also found that interviewing pairs of teachers, though harder to transcribe afterwards, was useful and as Highet (2003) suggests provides a better balance of power between interviewer and interviewees.

This research has indicated a number of possible areas for further study. It would be interesting to explore the Bourdieuan analysis in terms of how the social class and background of teachers might affect their response to inspection or being observed by their senior leaders. I also touched on the different routes into teaching and this may also be significant and could be investigated further.

Ofsted is an ever-evolving organisation and, with a radically new framework and organisation of inspections from September 2015, there will be further scope to explore how the new criteria for judging the quality of teaching (learning and assessment, as they are called in the new handbook, Ofsted, 2015k) are received by schools and inspectors.

I was conscious that an important player in the field of inspection – the additional inspector (to be called 'Ofsted inspector' from September 2015 and not to be confused with HMI) – was overlooked in my research, apart from occasionally drawing on my own inspection experience. Research that focuses on how Ofsted inspectors perceive and use the teaching criteria and other Ofsted guidance to inform their inspection judgements would be worth pursuing as well as a Bourdieuan perspective of their perceptions of how they have been treated since 2012 (to pursue my suggestion of the symbolic violence that has used against them).

7.6. Concluding remarks

This research has highlighted how responsive Ofsted has been since its inception to external criticism and government policies; the number of different frameworks and handbooks are testimony to that. The teaching criteria have not been affected as much as the structure of the inspection framework. The main components of what inspectors should look for when evaluating the quality of teaching are the same as in the earliest frameworks, which were based on HMIs' 'collective wisdom' (Lee and Fitz, 1997). There has been a clear shift from teaching as a performance and 'the lesson' to looking at the bigger picture of teaching over time and the impact on pupils' progress and attainment; these changes were welcomed by the headteachers and teachers I interviewed.

Ofsted has not attempted to justify its teaching criteria, though linked them to the Teachers' Standards in 2012. There is synergy between Ofsted's teaching criteria and findings from academic research into what makes teaching effective. Although the main features of the teaching criteria have remained constant, albeit with additions such as a focus on different groups of pupils, in each of the 11 iterations (and 12 as from September 2015) of the inspection guidance the language of the teaching criteria has changed, sometimes seemingly for its own sake. The inclusion of descriptors for each of the teaching grades, introduced in 2005, has I believe exacerbated the problem for schools, which is a view supported by former HMI Margaret. The language of the criteria and difference between grades are open to interpretation and very subjective. As schools struggle to gain the all-important 'good' Ofsted outcome, an industry has developed offering publications and training in the 'perfect Ofsted lesson'.

The amount of criticism targeted at Ofsted has increased since 2012 and become more strident in tone, calling Ofsted 'a disgrace' (Garner, 2015a) and the ATL union giving HMCI a vote of no confidence (Garner, 2013). The quality of teaching has assumed greater significance since 2012 as one of only four inspection judgements and the government has linked clearer consequences to Ofsted

outcomes, such as forced academisation. Schools can now only be judged 'outstanding' overall if teaching is judged outstanding. Outstanding schools are exempt from being inspected (DfE, 2011b) and can apply for teaching school status (NCTL, 2014).

The current HMCI Sir Michael Wilshaw has responded rapidly to teachers' and unions' concerns about inconsistency, the suggestion that Ofsted has a preferred teaching approach and over-reliance by some inspectors on performance data. He has removed the grade for teaching in a lesson, banned certain phrases about teaching in inspection reports and said publicly that some inspectors rely too much on data. However, Ofsted's responsiveness, although welcomed by teachers in some respects, has created its own problems, as schools and inspectors try to come to terms with yet another set of rules to keep themselves on top of the game (Ball, 2003). The changes do much to appease headteachers and unions, but arguably reflect mistrust and increasing symbolic violence towards inspectors.

In Bourdieuan terms, there is a clear hierarchy in the field of inspection, with HMCI at the top, influenced by government and politics, followed by HMI, who write the criteria, the 'rules of the game'. Jenkins (2002: 70) describes 'the feel for the game' as one of Bourdieu's most 'potent metaphors'. Inspection outcomes represent increasingly high stakes in England (Maguire et al, 2011). There seems to be a misrecognition (Swartz, 1997), from those with the most symbolic capital, that is HMI and HMCI, of the significance of an inspection outcome for a school, culminating in Sir Michael Wilshaw wanting to ban schools from 'preparing for an inspection' by having a mock-inspection (Wilshaw, 2014a).

Teaching has been recognised as a key factor in affecting pupils' achievements (for example, Coe et al, 2015; Husbands and Pearce, 2012) and has always been an important part of an Ofsted inspection. Its significance has grown since 2012, because of changes to the inspection framework, and resulted in widespread concerns about inspectors' consistency, credibility and competence to evaluate teaching, and an over-reliance on performance data. Ofsted's response has been

to bring inspections in house, to reduce ('cull') the number of non-HMI inspectors, increase the number of practitioners who inspect and to change the framework for inspection yet again for September 2015. Time will tell whether these changes appease the critics. I firmly believe, and this is supported by the interviewees, that Ofsted has contributed to improvement in the quality of teaching in English primary schools, but that the time is right for a change in approach in response to schools' increasing understanding and desire to take ownership of the rules of the 'Ofsted game'. Ofsted has become too high stakes in this country and this is reflected in the following comments:

I think that too many schools live in fear actually [of Ofsted]. In fear, or in preparation. [headteacher Bindu]

It's all about Ofsted isn't it? What will Ofsted want? And everything revolves around that'. [teacher Kylie]

This research has taught me a great deal and changed the way I think about Ofsted and, though to a lesser extent, my philosophical approach to the way I conduct inspections. I still believe in the need for an organisation like Ofsted and that it has helped to improve the quality of teaching in primary schools since 1992, but until now failed to appreciate quite how powerful its influence had become and the lengths that schools go to get the best outcome. I no longer feel that the grade descriptors are necessary or useful, quite the opposite. The constant changes of criteria have been very unhelpful and an example of Ofsted's 'misrecognition' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 172), which is a concept that I never considered prior to this research. I have become more critical of Ofsted and how it communicates its expectations to schools and the over-direction and criticism of additional inspectors, with 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu, 1977: 190), much as I baulked at the term at first, as an apposite term for their treatment especially in the last three years.

I do not think that my own inspection philosophy has changed much as a result of this research. I continue to believe in 'doing good as you go' and in 'leaving a school in a better place than you found it': principles instilled in me during my years as an HMI. I will continue to inspect without 'fear or favour' and to never stop appreciating that the opportunity to inspect schools is a real privilege. I am, however, more conscious of the impact of inspections on the recipients, particularly teachers. My inspection practice has, however, had to change because of the numerous amendments to the inspection framework and handbooks in the past six years and, since September 2015, to the management of inspections directly by Ofsted. These changes have resulted in, very often, more to do within the available time. For example, there is a greater emphasis now on inspecting safeguarding and how schools are promoting British values. The latest framework (Ofsted, 2015k) requires lead inspector to prepare three additional forms that have to be completed and sent with the draft inspection report, adding to the workload.

As a result of my interviews with teachers, I am more conscious of seeing things from the teachers' perspective and am grateful that we no longer have to grade lessons or even teaching when we feedback after an observation; changes that were introduced in 2014. The recent government's white paper *Educational Excellence Everywhere* (DfE, 2016: 22) includes a proposition that Ofsted should no longer award an overall grade for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment 'to help clarify that the focus of inspection is on outcomes and to reduce burdens on schools and teachers'. This will be a radical change and will return the emphasis to a school's data and raise questions about the purpose of visiting a school to inspect it at all (Richards, 2016).

Finally, the teachers' and headteachers' passion for doing the best for their pupils, often in difficult circumstances, will be a lasting emotional memory from my interviews for this research.

Appendices and Bibliography

Appendix 1 Timetable of research interviews

	Headteacher	Teachers	Former / current Ofsted employee	Sent transcripts for checking	Sent draft chapter for checking
1. Pilot	21/01/2014			May/ June/ July 2014	May 2015
2. Pilot		21/01/2014			
3. Pilot			17/02/14		
4.			4/4/2014		
5.			11/04/2014		
6.	23/05/2014				
7.		23/05/2014			
8.	02/06/2014				
9.		02/06/2014			
10.	03/06/2014				
11.		03/06/2014			
12.	04/06/2014				
13.		04/06/2014			
14.	04/06/2014				
15.		04/06/2014			
16.	05/06/2014				
17.		05/06/2014			
18.	09/06/14				
19.		09/06/14			
20.	12/06/14				
21.		12/06/14			
22.	18/06/14				
23.		18/06/14			
24.			08/07/14		

Appendix 2 Ethics approval and sample consent form

The research for this project was submitted for ethics consideration under the reference EDU12/044 in the Department of Education and was approved under the procedures of the University of Roehampton's Ethics Committee on 4/12/2012.

A sample consent form is included here.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project:

An exploration of the development of the Office for standards in education (Ofsted) criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching in mainstream schools, and how the criteria are perceived and used by primary school headteachers and teachers

Brief Description of Research Project:

The aim of the research is to critically examine the criteria used by Ofsted inspectors to evaluate the quality of teaching in maintained schools, how these criteria have changed from the first Ofsted inspections in 1993 to the present day, the factors that appear to have influenced their construction, and how these criteria are interpreted and utilised in primary schools.

The research will involve:

- An analysis of education policy documents and other literature pertaining to and since the introduction of Ofsted in 1992, with a focus on the criteria used by inspectors to judge the quality of teaching, and what may have influenced the construction of and amendments to the criteria since 1992 and up to the present day
- Interviews with former/ current Ofsted employees who are/were involved in overseeing or writing the criteria
- Interviews with primary school headteachers and teachers

The research involves interviews with three or four former/ current Ofsted employees with senior positions in the organisation between 1992 and 2014 and who have been involved in writing or overseeing the writing of the teaching criteria.

Up to 14 primary school headteachers who have been in post for at least five years will also be interviewed to learn about their views of the criteria and how they use them, if at all, in their schools.

Two or three teachers in the schools of the headteachers will also be interviewed to learn about their views of the teaching criteria and how they use them in their classrooms.

The interviews will be audio recorded, with the consent of the interviewees. I will also make a few notes during the interviews.

The interviews will take place in the schools, in the case of the headteachers and teachers, and at a time and location that allows for confidentiality and minimal risk of being disturbed during the one hour session. Mutually convenient location will be found for the former/ current Ofsted employees. Confidentiality will be maintained.

Participants will be free to withdraw from the interviews or their involvement at any time. In view of the fact that the majority of participants will be known to the investigator, they can indicate their wish to withdraw by sending an email to the address given above.

Participants will be sent a draft copy of the thesis well before it is finalised and will have the right to ask for any quotes (which will be anonymous) that they believe came from them, to be removed.

The interviews will last for approximately one hour.

Investigator Contact Details:

Name	Helena McVeigh
Department	Education
University address	University of Roehampton
Postcode	Erasmus House
Roehampton Lane	
London	
SW15 5PU	
Email	mcveighh@roehampton.ac.uk
Telephone	01753884298

Consent Statement:

I agree to take part in this research, and am aware that I am free to withdraw at any point. I understand that the information I provide will be treated in confidence by the investigator and that my identity will be protected in the publication of any findings.

Name

Signature

Date

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the investigator. However, if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Head of Research (or if the researcher is a student you can also contact the Director of Studies.)

Director of Studies Contact Details: Professor of Education and Philosophy
and Head of Research Contact Details:

Name	Dr Richard Race	Name	Prof Andrew Stables
University	Froebel College	University	Froebel College
Address	Roehampton Lane	Address	Roehampton Lane
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	SW15 5PJ		SW15 5PJ
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Telephone	020 8392 3760	Telephone	020 8392 3865

Appendix 3: Interview questions



Title of the Research Project:

An exploration of the development of the Office for standards in education (Ofsted) criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching in mainstream schools, and how the criteria are perceived and used by primary school headteachers and teachers

(i) Questions for former/ current Ofsted personnel

Questions will be followed up in response to participants' comments

1. Do you have any questions about the information I provided about the research?
2. Please explain when you joined HMI and what your role is/ was in Ofsted.
3. Have you been involved in writing or overseeing the writing or revising the criteria for judging the quality of teaching?
4. How are/ were the criteria chosen?
5. When a new framework is introduced, how and why are the criteria changed?
6. In what ways have policy makers taken an interest in the criteria for teaching?
7. How did their involvement/ interest change the way the criteria were written?
8. Can you give examples of specific changes that were influenced by government policy?
9. How have the criteria been influenced by developments in education theory, for example, in our understanding of how children learn?
10. Have the criteria been influenced or informed by findings from education research?
11. If yes (to Q9) what was the research?
12. In what ways do you think the criteria are influencing what happens in school classrooms?
13. What do you believe are the differences in the influence on practice between primary and secondary schools?
14. How does Ofsted help inspectors to use the criteria and apply judgements consistently?
15. Does Ofsted's monitoring of inspections and reports reveal any discrepancies in the way that inspectors interpret the criteria?
16. If yes to question 14, can you think of any examples?
17. Do you have any other comments about the criteria or how they were written?

Many thanks for your help with this research.

Title of Research Project:

An exploration of the development of the Office for standards in education (Ofsted) criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching in mainstream schools, and how the criteria are perceived and used by primary school headteachers and teachers

(ii) Questions for headteachers

Questions will be followed up in response to participants' comments.

1. Do you have any questions about the information I provided about my research?
2. How long have you been a headteacher?
3. When were you last inspected?
4. Have you always made use of Ofsted's criteria for judging the quality of teaching?
5. The Ofsted criteria for judging the quality of teaching have changed many times since the first primary inspections in 1994. Are you aware of changes to the criteria for teaching since you have been a teacher/ headteacher?
6. In what ways have you noticed that they have changed?
7. Are you aware of the political/ government policy influences on the criteria?
Can you give examples?
8. What other influences do you believe have affected the criteria?
9. How do you use the criteria in your school?
10. How do your teachers use the criteria?
11. Do the criteria reflect what you consider to be best practice in teaching?
12. Is it useful to have grade descriptors for the criteria?
13. How do you make use of the grade descriptors?
14. What, if any, sorts of changes would you like to see to the criteria?
15. During the most recent inspection, were you aware of the team referring to the criteria for teaching (for example in meetings or after lesson observations)?
16. Do you believe that Ofsted criteria for teaching undermine your (headteacher's) professionalism and autonomy?
17. Do you have any other comments/ questions about Ofsted's criteria for teaching?

Many thanks for your help with the research!

Title of Research Project:

An exploration of the development of the Office for standards in education (Ofsted) criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching in mainstream schools, and how the criteria are perceived and used by primary school headteachers and teachers

(iii) Questions for teachers

Questions will be followed up in response to participants' comments.

1. Do you have any questions about the information I provided about my research?
2. How long have you been a teacher?
3. The Ofsted criteria for judging the quality of teaching have changed many times since the first primary inspections in 1994. Are you aware of changes to the criteria for teaching since you started teaching in....?
4. In what ways have noticed that they have changed?
5. Are you aware of the political/ government policy influences on the criteria?
Can you give examples?
6. What other influences do you believe have affected the criteria?
7. To what extent are the criteria useful to you as a teacher?
8. Is it useful to have grade descriptors for the criteria?
9. How do you make use of the grade descriptors?
10. Does your headteacher expect you to use the teaching criteria to plan lessons?
11. Does your headteacher/ other senior teachers use the criteria when observing your lessons?
12. Do you think that the criteria reflect best practice in teaching?
13. What, if any, sorts of changes would you implement to the criteria?
14. Do you believe that Ofsted criteria for teaching undermine your professionalism and autonomy?
15. Do you have any other questions/ comments about Ofsted's criteria for teaching?

Many thanks for your help with the research!

Appendix 4 Secretaries of State for Education since 1979

(Extracted and adapted from Gillard (2011))

Secretary of State for Education	Took up office	Left office	Political party	Prime Minister	SCI/ Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
Mark Carlisle	5 May 1979	14 September 1981	Conservative	Margaret Thatcher	SCI Sheila Browne, (1974–1983)
Sir Keith Joseph	14 September 1981	21 May 1986			
Kenneth Baker	21 May 1986	24 July 1989			SCI Eric Bolton (1983- 1991)
John MacGregor	24 July 1989	2 November 1990			
Kenneth Clarke	2 November 1990	10 April 1992	Conservative	John Major	HMCI Stewart Sutherland (1992-1994)
John Patten	10 April 1992	20 July 1994			Chris Woodhead (1994- 2000)
<u>Gillian Shephard</u>	20 July 1995	2 May 1997			
<u>David Blunkett</u>	2 May 1997	8 June 2001	<u>Labour</u>	<u>Tony Blair</u>	Mike Tomlinson (2000- 2002)
<u>Estelle Morris</u>	8 June 2001	24 October 2002 (resigned)	<u>Labour</u>		
<u>Charles Clarke</u>	24 October 2002	15 December 2004	<u>Labour</u>		David Bell (2002- 2006)
<u>Ruth Kelly</u>	15 December 2004	5 May 2006	<u>Labour</u>		A Maurice Smith (Jan 2006-Oct 2006- acting)
<u>Alan Johnson</u>	5 May 2006	27 June 2007	<u>Labour</u>		Christine Gilbert (Oct 2006- 2011)
<u>Ed Balls</u> ³⁷	27 June 2007	11 May 2010	<u>Labour</u>	<u>Gordon Brown</u>	Miriam Rosen (July 2011- Dec 2011-acting)
<u>Michael Gove</u>	11 May 2010	15 July 2014	Coalition government (Conservative with the Lib Dem party)	<u>David Cameron</u>	Sir Michael Wilshaw (Jan 2012-present)
<u>Nicky Morgan</u>	15 July 2014	incumbent	Coalition then Conservative May 2015-	<u>David Cameron</u>	

³⁷ Ed Balls was SOS for the Department of Children, Schools and Families

Department of Education and Science (DES), 1964–1992

Department for Education (DfE), 1992–1995

Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), 1995–2001

Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2001–2007

Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), 2007–2010

Department for Education (DfE), 2010–

Appendix 5 Comparison of the areas that Ofsted inspections reported on linked to the Education Acts											
Education Act (relevant section for inspection of schools)	Education Schools Act 1992 (Section 9)		Schools inspection act 1996 (Section 10)		Education Act 2005 Every Child Matters (Section 5)		Education Act 2010 (Section 5 of Education Act 2005)				
Areas reported on ³⁸	1993/4	1995	2000	2003	2005	2009	Jan 2012	Sep 2012	Sep 2013	Jan 2014	Sep 2014
Standards of achievement (attainment and progress)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pupils' personal development inc attendance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	39				
Behaviour	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Safety	40						✓ ⁴¹	✓	✓	✓	✓
Teaching (and learning) quality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Curriculum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	42				
Welfare, care and guidance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Pupils' SMSC development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	43				
Partnership with parents and others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	44				
Leadership and management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staffing, accommodation and resources	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Governance	45				✓	✓	✓ ⁴⁶	✓	✓	✓	✓
Standards and quality in subjects	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Efficiency and value for money	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Grades: point scale	5	5	7	7	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Descriptors for each grade	47				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lessons graded	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Teaching graded	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

³⁸ The exact titles differed in each framework, but areas are broadly the same.

³⁹ Attendance included with behaviour and safety

⁴⁰ Included under welfare, care and guidance

⁴¹ Includes attendance

⁴² Curriculum is reported briefly under leadership and management.

⁴³ Provision for pupils' SMSC development is reported under leadership and management.

⁴⁴ Reported very briefly under leadership and management.

⁴⁵ Briefly reported under leadership and management.

⁴⁶ Not graded, but evaluated and reported in some detail.

⁴⁷ Very broad descriptors.

Appendix 6 Examples of Ofsted's criteria for teaching: Extracts from Ofsted Handbooks for Inspection

(1). 1994 Handbook for the Inspection of Schools (Ofsted, 1994a: 26)

Section 7.1 Quality of teaching

Evaluation criteria

Teaching quality is to be judged by the extent to which:

- teachers have clear objectives for their lessons;
- pupils are aware of these objectives;
- teachers have a secure command of the subject;
- lessons have suitable content; activities are well-chosen to promote learning of that content;
- teaching methods engage, motivate and challenge all pupils, enabling them to progress at a suitable pace and to be aware of their achievements and progress.
- The report should include evaluation of:
- the quality of teaching provided and the effects of its strengths and weaknesses on the quality of learning and standards of pupils' achievements;
- the effectiveness of lesson planning;
- teachers' knowledge of subjects;
- how well the work is matched to pupils' attainments and abilities;
- whether teachers' expectations of pupils are appropriately high.

Section 7.2 Assessment, recording and reporting

Evaluation criteria

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is to be judged by the extent to which:

- the school's arrangements result in accurate records of the achievement of individual pupils
- the school's arrangements for assessment are manageable;
- the outcomes are constructive and helpful to pupils, teachers, parents and employers;
- the outcomes inform subsequent work.

The report should include evaluation of:

- the accuracy and consistency of assessment, including the marking of pupils work and a judgment of the extent to which assessment of the work of individual pupils is used to promote higher standards;
- the arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and progress;
- whether the school complies with the requirements for recording national curriculum assessments and with requirements for pupils with statements of special educational need;
- the frequency and usefulness of reports to parents, including annual reviews for pupils with statements of special educational need;
- the extent to which the school analyses assessment data in order to improve pupils' performance.

(2). 2000 Handbook for Inspecting Primary and Nursery Schools, with guidance on self-evaluation. (Ofsted, 2000a: 46)

■ 3. How well are pupils taught?

Inspectors must evaluate and report on:

the quality of teaching, judged in terms of its impact on pupils' learning and what makes it successful or not.

Inspectors must include evaluation of:

- how well the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught;
- how well the teaching meets the needs of all its pupils, taking account of age, gender, ethnicity, capability, special educational needs, gifted and talented and those for whom English is an additional language;
- The teaching in each subject, commenting on any variations between subjects and year groups⁴⁸.

■ How well pupils learn and make progress.

In determining their judgments, inspectors should consider the extent to which teachers:

- show good subject knowledge and understanding in the way they present and discuss their subject;
- are technically competent in teaching phonics and other basic skills;
- plan effectively, setting objectives that pupils understand;
- challenge and inspire pupils, expecting the most of them, so as to deepen their knowledge and understanding;
- use methods which enable all pupils to learn effectively;
- manage pupils well and insist on high standards of behaviour;
- use time, support staff and other resources, especially information and communication technology, effectively;
- assess pupils' work thoroughly and use assessments to help and encourage pupils to overcome difficulties;
- use homework effectively to reinforce and extend what is learned in school;

and the extent to which pupils:

- acquire new knowledge or skills, develop ideas and increase their understanding;
- apply intellectual, physical or creative effort in their work;
- are productive and work at a good pace;
- show interest in their work and are able to sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves;
- understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve.

(3). 2005: Using the Evaluation Schedule (Ofsted, 2005b: 8 - 9)

How effective are teaching and learning?

Inspectors should evaluate:

- how well teaching and resources promote learning, address the full range of learners' needs and meet course requirements
- the suitability and rigour of assessment in planning and monitoring learners' progress

⁴⁸ Not required for short inspections.

- the diagnosis of, and provision for, additional learning needs

and, where appropriate:

- the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and development.

Evaluating the quality of teaching

Outstanding (1)	Teaching is at least good in all or nearly all respects and is exemplary in significant elements. As a result, learners thrive and make exceptionally good progress.
Good (2)	Learners make good progress and show good attitudes to their work, as a result of effective teaching. The teachers' good subject knowledge lends confidence to their teaching styles, which engage learners and encourage them to work well independently. Any unsatisfactory behaviour is managed effectively. The level of challenge stretches without inhibiting. Based upon thorough and accurate assessment that informs learners how to improve, work is closely tailored to the full range of learners' needs, so that all can succeed. Learners are guided to assess their work themselves. Teaching assistants and other classroom helpers, and resources, are well deployed to support learning. Those with additional learning needs have work well matched to their needs based upon a good diagnosis of them. Good relationships support parents/carers in helping learners to succeed.
Satisfactory (3)	Teaching is inadequate in no major respect, and may be good in some respects, enabling learners to enjoy their education and make the progress that should be expected of them.
Inadequate (4)	Learners generally, or particular groups of them, do not make adequate progress because the teaching is unsatisfactory. Learners do not enjoy their work. Behaviour is often inappropriate. Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum and the course requirements are inadequate, and the level of challenge is often wrongly pitched. The methods used do not sufficiently engage and encourage the learners. Not enough independent learning takes place or learners are excessively passive. Inappropriate behaviour is not adequately managed. Assessment is not frequent or accurate enough to monitor learners' progress, so teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of learners' needs. Learners do not know how to improve. Teaching assistants, resources, and parents/carers are inadequately utilised to support learners.

(4). 2009: The Evaluation Schedule for Schools (Ofsted, 2009a: 31-32)

The quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning

Inspectors should evaluate:

how well teaching promotes learning, progress and enjoyment for all pupils

how well assessment is used to meet the needs of all pupils.

The quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning: grade descriptors

Outstanding	Teaching is at least good and much is outstanding, with the result that the pupils are making exceptional progress. It is highly effective in inspiring pupils and ensuring that they learn extremely well. Excellent subject knowledge is applied consistently to challenge and inspire pupils. Resources, including new technology, make a marked contribution to the quality of learning, as does the precisely targeted support provided by other adults. Teachers and other adults are acutely aware of their pupils' capabilities and of their prior learning and understanding, and plan very effectively to build on these. Marking and dialogue between teachers, other adults and pupils are consistently of a very high quality. Pupils understand in detail how to improve their work and are consistently supported in doing so. Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with striking impact on the quality of learning.
Good	The teaching is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged. The great majority of teaching is securing good progress and learning. Teachers generally have strong subject knowledge which enthuses and challenges most pupils and contributes to their good progress. Good and imaginative use is made of resources, including new technology to enhance learning. Other adults' support is well focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. As a result of good assessment procedures, teachers and other adults plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are provided with detailed feedback, both orally and through marking. They know how well they have done and can discuss what they need to do to sustain good progress. Teachers listen to, observe and question groups of pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.
Satisfactory	Teaching may be good in some respects and there are no endemic inadequacies in particular subjects or across year groups. Pupils show interest in their work and are making progress that is broadly in line with their capabilities. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Adequate use is made of a range of resources, including new technology, to support learning. Support provided by other adults is effectively deployed. Teaching ensures that pupils are generally engaged by their work and little time is wasted. Regular and accurate assessment informs planning, which generally meets the needs of all groups of pupils. Pupils are informed about their progress and how to improve through marking and dialogue with adults. Teachers monitor pupils' work during lessons, pick up general misconceptions and adjust their plans accordingly to support learning.
Inadequate	Expectations are inappropriate. Too many lessons are barely satisfactory or are inadequate and teaching fails to promote the pupils' learning, progress or enjoyment. or Assessment takes too little account of the pupils' prior learning or their understanding of tasks and is not used effectively to help them improve.

(5). January 2012: The Evaluation Schedule for the inspection of maintained schools and academies from January 2012 (Ofsted, 2012a: 10- 11)

The most important role of teaching is to promote learning so as to raise pupils' achievement. It is also important in promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching should be understood to include teachers' planning and implementing of learning activities across the whole curriculum, as well as marking, assessment and feedback. It comprises activities within and outside the classroom, such as support and intervention.

The judgement on the quality of teaching must take account of evidence of pupils' learning and progress.

Grade descriptors:⁴⁹ quality of teaching in the school⁵⁰

Outstanding (1)	Much of the teaching in all key stages and most subjects is outstanding and never less than consistently good. As a result, almost all pupils are making rapid and sustained progress. All teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. Drawing on excellent subject knowledge, teachers plan astutely and set challenging tasks based on systematic, accurate assessment of pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding. They use well judged and often imaginative teaching strategies that, together with sharply focused and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately. Consequently, pupils learn exceptionally well across the curriculum. The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective. Teachers and other adults generate high levels of enthusiasm for, participation in and commitment to learning. Teaching promotes pupils' high levels of resilience, confidence and independence when they tackle challenging activities. Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning. Time is used very well and every opportunity is taken to successfully develop crucial skills, including being able to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Appropriate and regular homework contributes very well to pupils' learning. Marking and constructive feedback from teachers and pupils are frequent and of a consistently high quality, leading to high levels of engagement and interest.
Good (2)	As a result of teaching that is mainly good, with examples of outstanding teaching, most pupils and groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are achieving well over time. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. Teachers in most subjects and key stages use their well-developed subject knowledge and their accurate assessment of pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding to plan effectively and set challenging tasks. They use effective teaching strategies that, together with appropriately targeted support and intervention, match most pupils' individual needs so that pupils learn well across the curriculum. The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is very efficient. Teachers and other adults enthuse and motivate most pupils to participate. Teaching generally promotes pupils' resilience, confidence and independence when tackling challenging activities. Teachers regularly listen astutely to, carefully observe and skilfully question groups of pupils and individuals during lessons in order to re-shape tasks and explanations to improve learning. Teaching consistently deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding and allows them to develop a range of skills, including communication, reading and writing and mathematics,

⁴⁹ Grade descriptors are not to be used as a checklist but should be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach.

⁵⁰ These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the school as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons.

	<p>across the curriculum. Appropriate and regular homework contributes well to pupils' learning. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and accurately and discuss assessments with them so that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.</p>
<p>Satisfactory (3)</p>	<p>Teaching results in most pupils, and groups of pupils, currently in the school making progress that is broadly in line with that made by pupils nationally with similar starting points. There is likely to be some good teaching and there are no endemic inadequacies in particular subjects, across year groups or for particular groups of pupils. Teachers' expectations enable most pupils to work hard and achieve satisfactorily and encourage them to make progress. Due attention is often given to the careful assessment of pupils' learning but this is not always conducted rigorously enough and may result in some unnecessary repetition of work for pupils and tasks being planned and set that do not fully challenge. Teachers monitor pupils' work during lessons, picking up any general misconceptions and adjust their plans accordingly to support learning. These adaptations are usually successful but occasionally are not timely or relevant and this slows learning for some pupils. Teaching strategies ensure that the individual needs of pupils are usually met. Teachers carefully deploy any available additional support and set appropriate homework, and these contribute reasonably well to the quality of learning for pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Pupils are informed about the progress they are making and how to improve further through marking and dialogue with adults that is usually timely and encouraging. This approach ensures that most pupils want to work hard and improve. Communication skills, including reading and writing, and mathematics may be taught inconsistently across the curriculum.</p>
<p>Inadequate (4)</p>	<p>Teaching is likely to be inadequate where any of the following apply.</p> <p>As a result of weak teaching over time, pupils or groups of pupils currently in the school are making inadequate progress.</p> <p>Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations and teaching over time fails to excite, enthuse, engage or motivate particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.</p> <p>Pupils cannot communicate, read, write or use mathematics as well as they should.</p> <p>Learning activities are not sufficiently well matched to the needs of pupils so that they make inadequate progress.</p>

(6). September 2012: School Inspection Handbook (Ofsted, 2012b: 34- 35)

108. The most important role of teaching is to promote learning and to raise pupils' achievement. It is also important in promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching should be understood to include teachers' planning and implementing of learning activities, including the setting of appropriate homework, across the whole curriculum, as well as marking, assessment and feedback. It comprises activities within and outside the classroom, such as additional support and intervention.

109. The judgement on the quality of teaching must take account of evidence of pupils' learning and progress over time. Inspectors must not simply aggregate the grades awarded following lesson observations.

110. Inspectors should consider the extent to which the 'Teachers' Standards' are being met.

111. Inspectors must not expect teaching staff to teach in any specific way or follow a prescribed methodology.

112. Inspectors must evaluate the use that is made of teaching assistants.

Grade descriptors⁵¹ – Quality of teaching in the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

Much of the teaching in all key stages and most subjects is outstanding and never less than consistently good. As a result, almost all pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those for whom the pupil premium provides support, are making rapid and sustained progress.

All teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning.

The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum.

Teachers and other adults generate high levels of engagement and commitment to learning across the whole school.

Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make rapid gains.

Teachers use well-judged and often inspirational teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that, together with sharply focused and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately. Consequently, pupils learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Good (2)

Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is usually good, with examples of some outstanding teaching. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational

⁵¹ These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the school as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons.

needs, and those for whom the pupil premium provides support, make good progress and achieve well over time.

Teachers have high expectations. They plan and teach lessons that deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and enable them to develop a range of skills across the curriculum.

Teachers listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.

Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively.

Teachers and other adults create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested and engaged.

Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress regularly and accurately. They ensure that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

Effective teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework, and appropriately targeted support and intervention are matched well to most pupils' individual needs, including those most and least able, so that pupils learn well in lessons.

Requires improvement (3)

Teaching requires improvement as it is not good.

Inadequate (4)

Teaching is likely to be inadequate where **any** of the following apply:

As a result of weak teaching over time, pupils or particular groups of pupils including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those for whom the pupil premium provides support, are making inadequate progress.

Pupils cannot communicate, read, write, or apply mathematics as well as they should.

Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations and teaching over time fails to engage or interest particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

Learning activities are not sufficiently well matched to the needs of pupils.

Quality of teaching in the school

The most important role of teaching is to promote learning and to raise pupils' achievement. It is also important in promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching should be understood to include teachers' planning and implementing of learning activities, including the setting of appropriate homework, across the whole curriculum, as well as marking, assessment and feedback. It encompasses activities within and outside the classroom, such as additional support and intervention.

The judgement on the quality of teaching must take account of evidence of pupils' learning and progress over time. Inspectors must not simply aggregate the grades awarded following lesson observations.

Inspectors should consider the extent to which the 'Teachers' Standards' are being met.⁵²

Inspectors must not expect teaching staff to teach in any specific way. Schools and teachers should decide for themselves how to teach so that children are engaged in lessons, acquire knowledge and learn well.

Inspectors must evaluate the use of, and contribution made by, teaching assistants.

Grade descriptors⁵³ – Quality of teaching in the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

Much of the teaching in all key stages and most subjects is outstanding and never less than consistently good. As a result, almost all pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and the most able, are making rapid and sustained progress. All teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning.

The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum.

Teachers and other adults authoritatively impart knowledge to ensure students are engaged in learning, and generate high levels of commitment to learning across the school.

Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make rapid gains.

Teachers use well-judged and often imaginative teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that, together with clearly directed and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately. Consequently, pupils learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Good (2)

Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is usually good, with

⁵² DfE 'Teachers' Standards': effective from September 2012:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/reviewofstandards>.

⁵³ These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the school as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons.

examples of some outstanding teaching. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and the most able, make good progress and achieve well over time.

Teachers have high expectations. They plan and teach lessons that deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and enable them to develop a range of skills across the curriculum.

Teachers listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.

Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively.

Teachers and other adults create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested and engaged.

Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress regularly and accurately at all key stages, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They ensure that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

Effective teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework, and appropriately targeted support and intervention are matched well to most pupils' individual needs, including those most and least able, so that pupils learn well in lessons.

Requires improvement (3)

Teaching requires improvement as it is not good.

Inadequate (4)

Teaching is likely to be inadequate where **any** of the following apply:

As a result of weak teaching over time, pupils or particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and the most able, are making inadequate progress.

Pupils cannot communicate, read, write, or apply mathematics as well as they should.

Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations and teaching over time fails to engage or interest particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

Learning activities are not sufficiently well matched to the needs of pupils.

(8). January 2015: School Inspection Handbook (Based on the changes introduced in the September 2014 Handbook for Inspection) (Ofsted, 2015a: 57- 62)

175. The most important role of teaching is to promote learning and the acquisition of knowledge by pupils and to raise achievement. It is also important in promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching includes:

- ☐ planning for lessons and learning activities at other times in the school day
- ☐ how teachers impart knowledge to pupils, instruct them and engage them in other activities which also increase their knowledge and understanding
- ☐ the setting of appropriate, regular homework across subjects
- ☐ marking, assessment and feedback.

It encompasses activities within and outside the classroom, such as additional support and intervention. The quality of teaching received by pupils who attend off-site alternative provision should also be considered and evaluated.

176. Inspectors should not grade the quality of teaching in individual lesson observations, learning walks or equivalent activities. In arriving at a judgement on the overall quality of teaching, inspectors must consider strengths and weaknesses of teaching observed across the broad range of lessons. These must then be placed in the context of other evidence of pupils' learning and progress over time, including work in their books and folders, how well they can explain their knowledge and understanding in subjects, and outcomes in tests and examinations.

177. Inspectors should consider the extent to which the 'Teachers' Standards' are being met.

Grade descriptors – Quality of teaching in the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

Much teaching over time in all key stages and most subjects is outstanding and never less than consistently good. As a result, almost all pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, are making sustained progress that leads to outstanding achievement.

All teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning.

The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum.

Teachers and other adults authoritatively impart knowledge to ensure that pupils are engaged in learning and generate high levels of commitment to learning across the school. Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make significant and sustained gains in their learning.

Teachers use well-judged teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that,

together with clearly directed and timely support and intervention, match pupils' needs accurately.

Good (2)

Teaching over time in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is consistently good. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make good progress and achieve well over time.

Teachers have high expectations. They plan and teach lessons that deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and enable them to develop a range of skills across the curriculum.

Teachers listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.

Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively.

Teachers and other adults create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested and engaged.

Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress regularly and accurately at all key stages. They ensure that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

Effective teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework and well-targeted support and intervention, are matched closely to most pupils' needs, including those most and least able, so that pupils learn well in lessons.

Requires improvement (3)

Teaching requires improvement because it is not good.

Inadequate (4)

Teaching is likely to be inadequate where **any** of the following apply:

As a result of weak teaching over time, pupils or particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, are making inadequate progress.

Pupils cannot communicate, read, write, or apply mathematics as well as they should.

(9). September 2015: School Inspection Handbook. (Ofsted, 2015k: 42- 48)

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

149. Inspectors will make a judgement on the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment by evaluating the extent to which:

- the teachers' standards are being met
- teachers and other staff have consistently high expectations of what each pupil can achieve, including most able and disadvantaged pupils
- teachers and other staff have a secure understanding of the age group they are working with and have relevant subject knowledge that is detailed and communicated well to pupils
- assessment information is gathered from looking at what pupils already know, understand and can do, and is informed by their parents/previous providers as appropriate in the early years
- assessment information is used to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies, including to identify pupils who are falling behind in their learning or who need additional support, enabling pupils to make good progress and achieve well
- except in the case of the very young, pupils understand how to improve as a result of useful feedback, written or oral, from teachers
- the school's engagement with parents, carers and employers helps them to understand how children and learners are doing in relation to the standards expected and what they need to do to improve
- equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity are promoted through teaching and learning
- English, mathematics and the skills necessary to function as an economically active member

Grade descriptors for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Note: Grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

Teachers demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They use questioning highly effectively and demonstrate understanding of the ways pupils think about subject content. They identify pupils' common misconceptions and act to ensure they are corrected.

Teachers plan lessons very effectively, making maximum use of lesson time and coordinating lesson resources well. They manage pupils' behaviour highly effectively with clear rules that are consistently enforced.

Teachers provide adequate time for practice to embed the pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills securely. They introduce subject content progressively and constantly demand more of pupils. Teachers identify and support any pupil who is falling behind, and enable almost all to catch up.

Teachers check pupils' understanding systematically and effectively in lessons, offering clearly directed and timely support.

Teachers provide pupils with incisive feedback, in line with the school's assessment policy, about what pupils can do to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. The pupils use this feedback effectively.

Teachers set challenging homework, in line with the school's policy and as appropriate for the age and stage of pupils, that consolidates learning, deepens understanding and prepares pupils very well for work to come.

Teachers embed reading, writing and communication and, where appropriate, mathematics exceptionally well across the curriculum, equipping all pupils with the necessary skills to make progress. For younger children in particular, phonics teaching is highly effective in enabling them to tackle unfamiliar words.

Teachers are determined that pupils achieve well. They encourage pupils to try hard, recognise their efforts and ensure that pupils take pride in all aspects of their work.

Teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils' attitudes to learning.

Pupils love the challenge of learning and are resilient to failure. They are curious, interested learners who seek out and use new information to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills. They thrive in lessons and also regularly take up opportunities to learn through extra-curricular activities.

Pupils are eager to know how to improve their learning. They capitalise on opportunities to use feedback, written or oral, to improve.

Parents are provided with clear and timely information on how well their child is progressing and how well their child is doing in relation to the standards expected. Parents are given guidance about how to support their child to improve.

Teachers are quick to challenge stereotypes and the use of derogatory language in lessons and around the school. Resources and teaching strategies reflect and value the diversity of pupils' experiences and provide pupils with a comprehensive understanding of people and communities beyond their immediate experience. Pupils love the challenge of learning.

Good (2)

Teachers use effective planning to help pupils learn well. Time in lessons is used productively. Pupils focus well on their learning because teachers reinforce expectations for conduct and set clear tasks that challenge pupils.

In lessons, teachers develop, consolidate and deepen pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. They give sufficient time for pupils to review what they are learning and to develop further. Teachers identify and support effectively those pupils who start to fall behind and intervene quickly to help them to improve their learning.

Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan learning that sustains pupils' interest and challenges their thinking. They use questioning skilfully to probe pupils' responses and they reshape tasks and explanations so that pupils better understand new concepts.

Teachers tackle misconceptions and build on pupils' strengths.

Teachers give pupils feedback in line with the school's assessment policy. Pupils use this feedback well and they know what they need to do to improve.

Teachers set homework, in line with the school's policy and as appropriate for the age and stage of pupils, that consolidates learning and prepares pupils well for work to come.

Teachers develop pupils' reading, writing and communication, and where appropriate mathematics, well across the curriculum. For younger children in particular, the teaching of phonics is effective in enabling them to tackle unfamiliar words.

Teachers expect and encourage all pupils to work with positive attitudes so that they can apply themselves and make strong progress.

Pupils develop the capacity to learn from mistakes and they become keen learners who want to find out more. Most are willing to find out new information to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills, both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities.

Most pupils commit to improving their work. They are given time to apply their knowledge and understanding in new ways that stretches their thinking in a wide range of subjects, and to practise key skills.

The school gives parents information about how well their child is progressing, how well their child is doing in relation to the standards expected, and what their child needs to do to improve.

Teachers promote equality of opportunity and diversity in teaching and learning.

Requires improvement (3)

Teaching, learning and assessment are not yet good.

Inadequate (4)

Teaching, learning and assessment are likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following applies:

Teaching is poorly planned.

Weak assessment practice means that teaching fails to meet pupils' needs.

Pupils or particular groups are making inadequate progress because teaching does not develop their knowledge, understanding and skills sufficiently.

Pupils cannot communicate, read, write or apply mathematics as well as they should, so they do not make sufficient progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills because they are unable to access the curriculum.

Teachers do not promote equality of opportunity or understanding of diversity effectively and so discriminate against the success of individuals or groups of pupils.

Appendix 7 A comparison of the features of the different criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching in Ofsted handbooks

Aspects of criteria	1993/4	1995	2000	2005	2009	Jan 2012	Sep 2012	Sep 2013	Jan 2014	Sep 2014
	No grade criteria			Grade criteria	Grade criteria					
Mentioned ↓	1= excellent, 2= very good, 3= good, 4= satisfactory, 5= unsatisfactory, 6= poor, 7= very poor.			1= outstanding, 2= good, 3= satisfactory, 4= inadequate.	1= outstanding, 2= good, 3= satisfactory, 4= inadequate.	1= outstanding, 2= good, 3= requires improvement, 4= inadequate.			No grade for teaching in lesson observations	
Lessons/ over time	L	L	L	L	L	OT	OT	OT	OT	OT
Teachers' Standards							✓	✓	✓	✓
Learners' progress				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Different groups eg SEN/ pupil premium				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ inc more able	✓ inc more able pupils
Subject knowledge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
High expectations/ level of challenge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Meets needs of all	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use of time/resources	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			
Deploys adults/TAs			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Manages behaviour	✓		✓	✓			✓			
Assessment	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pupils know how to improve				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use of homework	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clear objectives		✓	✓							
Content		✓								
Engages, motivates		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use of ICT/technology		✓	✓		✓					
Teach phonics			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Questioning					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Appendix 8 Evidence form for inspections up to and including 2009

EVIDENCE FORM													
Inspector's OIN		Inspection number		Observation time		Observation type	L	A	D	O			
Year group(s)		Grouping	MC	SU	SA	SL		BO	GI	MI	Present / NOR		
Subject codes		Support teachers /	SE	T	S	E	T	S	O	T	S	Inspector's EF No	
Focus (i.e. main purpose of the inspection activity)			Context										
Evaluation													
Summary of main points													
Judgement on the overall quality of the lesson (Leave blank when not a lesson)										1 = Outstanding, 4 = Inadequate			
Use for grades if there is sufficient evidence:													
Standards	Progress	Personal developmen	Teaching	Curriculum	Care, guidance &	Leadershi p &							
Particular evaluations related to safety, health, enjoyment, contribution to the community, economic well-being													

Appendix 9 Evidence form for inspections from January 2012 until July 2015

Evidence form – S5																	
Inspection Nº			Inspector's OIN			Date		Time of day		EF Nº							
						/ /											
Observation type (please tick one box only)																	
Lesson observation				Work analysis				Discussions			Other						
Focus (inspection trail or main purpose of the activity)				Context (lesson objective or description of activity)													
Information gathered for lesson observations only																	
Year group (s)				Grouping (see footnote ⁵⁴)		MC SU SA SL O		Gender B G MI		Subject codes				Present / NO R			
Evidence																	
<u>Evidence of SMSC</u>																	
<u>Evaluation</u>																	
Use for grades if there is sufficient evidence:									Time spent in this lesson (mins)								
Achievement of pupils				Quality of teaching				Running EF?				Y N					
Behaviour and safety of pupils				Leadership and management				No of lessons included in running EF									
Special focus – complete if necessary								If yes, cumulative time (mins)									

⁵⁴ Grouping codes: MC = Mixed ability class; SU = Setted, upper ability; SA = Setted, average ability; SL = Setted, lower ability; O = Other

Appendix 10 Proportions of primary schools with defined quality of teaching from 1994 to 2014

(As judged by Ofsted inspections)

Sources: Ofsted annual reports				
% of lessons across all primary schools				
Inspection year	Outstanding	Good or better	Satisfactory	Unsat or poor pre 2000
1993-4 *		33	40	27
1994-5**		40	42	18
1995-6		41	43	16
new framework				
1996-7		45	48	7
1997-8		55	40	5
1998-9		62	34	4
1999-2000		73	21	6
new framework				
% of primary schools with teaching grades				
2000-01		74	22	4
2001-02		76	21	3
2002-03		75	22	3
new framework				
2003-04		72	25	3
2004-05		74	23	3
new framework				
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
2005-06	7	53	36	4
2006-07	11	51	35	3
2007-08	12	52	33	3
2008-09	14	55	29	2
new framework				
2009-10	5	52	39	4
2010-11	4	53	39	3
2011-12				
new framework Jan 2012, then Sep 2012/ Sep 2013/ Sep 2014				
	Outstanding	Good	RI	Inadequate
2012-13	16	63	19	2
2013-14	15	67	16	2
2014-15				
* Inspected by HMI prior to Ofsted				
** revised framework				
Grades				
1993- 1995		1996 -2004		
	1 Excellent		1 Excellent	
	2 Good		2 Very good	
	3 Satisfactory		3 Good	
	4 Unsatisfactory		4 Satisfactory	
	5 Poor		5 Unsatisfactory	
			6 Poor	
			7 Very poor	
2005 - 2011		2012- 2015		
	1 Outstanding		1 Outstanding	
	2 Good		2 Good	
	3 Satisfactory		3 Requires improvement	
	4 Inadequate		4 Inadequate	

NB Data was not presented in the early annual reports in a consistent format. For example, the % of lessons graded good etc was broken down by year groups and by aspect of teaching, so it is difficult to compare until 2000, when the annual report included % of schools with good etc teaching by phase.

Appendix 11 Comparison of Teachers' Standards and Ofsted's September 2012 criteria for good teaching

2012 Teachers' Standards	Ofsted September 2012 criteria for 'good teaching'
<p>A teacher must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils • Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils • Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge • demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject. • Plan and teach well-structured lessons • Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils • Make accurate and productive use of assessment • Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is usually good, with examples of some outstanding teaching. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those for whom the pupil premium provides support, make good progress and achieve well over time. • Teachers have high expectations. They plan and teach lessons that deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and enable them to develop a range of skills across the curriculum. • Teachers listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning. • Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively. • Teachers and other adults create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested and engaged. • Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress regularly and accurately. They ensure that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. • Effective teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework, and appropriately targeted support and intervention are matched well to most pupils' individual needs, including those most and least able, so that pupils learn well. in lessons.

Appendix 12 Transcript of interview with a primary headteacher (with codes)

	Code/ category
H How long have you been a headteacher?	
Head This is my third year. Two years plus one year in acting role.	Context
Was a deputy for 3 years.	Experience
H Some questions are about changes in Ofsted criteria in your leadership role.	
Do you have any questions about the research before we get going?	
Head No	
H Thank you. Have you always made use of Ofsted's criteria for judging the quality of teaching- This is the latest version [<i>H shows the extract from Sep 2013 Ofsted Handbook</i>].	
Head Yes, we would refer to this when talking about lesson observation, and grading, but it is less for lesson observations nowadays because it is more generic about the quality of teaching overall. So it is more useful now in terms of head's reports, SEF, reporting on the global quality of teaching. This part's no quite so helpful as a 'this is how to'...We use your sheet. [<i>laughs..</i>]Which is driven from here? [points to the framework]	Generic criteria. For management not lessons
H Yes...Please can you give me a copy of what you use when you monitor? To collect for the research.	
Head All the different bits like books, lessons etc everything?	
H Yes please.	
H Can you think back over your time as a head. Have you always used the teaching criteria?	
Head Very much so in terms of when we were at H [her previous school] we would go through it and highlight, especially when we were in special measures, getting the SEF updated, making sure we had the evidence needed for each piece. S [the head of H] was very good at using the guidance. We do use it..Not sure we have really looked at this [Sep 2013] guidance, because there is one since we were Ofsteded, isn't there? It has changed hasn't it? We haven't looked too closely at that yet.	Approach in special measures Not aware of recent changes (Sep 2013)

H	Yes, there was one in Sep 2013.	
Head	We won't have looked too closely at that yet. That's not good is it [laughs]?	
H	Are you aware of changes in the criteria for teaching in your time as leader?	
Head	Yes- we compared the last one and the one before in a staff meeting- looking at now what you need to be good so that teachers were really clear about- comparing really so they actually read it. As an exercise to make them really think about how to produce a good lesson—is very challenging. We have used it to...for teachers levelling lessons from videos and stuff like that. We tried to get them familiar but also pulling out statements about marking- what you need to do to get your marking to at least good.	Use with staff Influence practice (eg marking)
H	Does it give advice about marking that you can use?	Specific guidance (marking)
Head	There was some-- may not be in the quality of teaching one...it may be there were some statements that you can pull out.	
	<i>[They look through to find it]</i>	
	There were slightly more specific statements in previous version.	
H	It could be here, like this..'must consider whether...[pointing to the criteria]?	
Head	Yes to try and make the whole picture- not just about lessons to your gradings.	
H	Has what inspectors look for changed over the years that you have been in teaching?	
Head	I don't remember when I was a young teacher- inspectors really looking at our books in the same way as they do now. When I think of the first Ofsted that I had in the days when you got the little envelopes, I don't remember them doing it.	Change in practice of inspectors since 1990s- look more at books.
H	The envelopes that gave grades? That didn't last long.	
Head	Yes [laughs]	
Head	I was Year 2 then so I would have had books, but a lot of the time I was in early years. Yeah.. I wasn't leadership so...I don't think we had data at all with all that rigour in those early days when the literacy strategy came in.	Different for leaders Literacy strategy

H Did they look at the literacy strategy do you feel, inspectors? Was that part of the brief?	
Head I don't think so. I think it was purely about the teaching and learning at that time and whether your lesson was a good lesson or not. I don't even remember- I was literacy lead and I implemented the literacy strategy in the school... I don't even remember being interviewed by the inspectors..I might have been .. it was a very long time ago..... about 1998/9. I wasn't a senior leader. It was quite different.	Literacy Strategy
H Do you feel that when you are a senior leader they mean something different to you?	
Head Yes- you are getting the bigger picture. When you are a teacher you are in your own little world. It is very personal when you are a teacher. It is very much about what you have achieved..I think it very hard for teachers to see the impact beyond what they are actually doing in front of the class, which is why they over-talk and do all those things and think it is a theatre performance. They forget that really there is much more to it. It is about the data. It is about everything else nowadays. We are getting there. But that's quite different.	Senior leader uses criteria differently- to get the big picture Data
H Do you think that the Ofsted criteria- calling all of this the criteria [<i>shows them again</i>]- does that help? How do you use that?	
Head [<i>big sigh</i>] I guess we use that as our framework for what we need to prioritise in terms of school improvement plan, writing the SEF and then planning CPD for the staff so that we can move them from where they are on to a bit nearer outstanding.	Management tool – for SEF, SDP and for CPD
H How do you use the criteria with your staff?	
Head We have looked at grade descriptions and compared them. Not hugely- lately- we need to go back to those. We are going to do some work on improving teaching ..without using those materials... and that will play a part in really being clear about ...looks like.	Used more before the inspection.
H Do you expect teachers to use the criteria when they plan their lessons?	
Head No..but that might be a useful tool for them to have lying around when planning lessons. We do highlight where the strengths are in the lessons we saw.	Use for planning- no
H When observing lessons, you do indicate strengths?	
Head Yes ...the strengths evident in that lesson, so they know which bit they are within [she means highlighting graded sections of the observation format]. Backs up	Use when observing lessons.

your.. ...can't argue so much with that as you can with.. perhaps is where Challenge Partners weren't tight enough because we didn't use anything to hang the judgements on, therefore it was left a little bit perhaps un.....what is the word I am looking for?... unqualified perhaps. That might have helped.	
H So you don't give that form with the criteria that you highlight to teachers?	Teachers given the criteria
Head Yeah yeah. They do have that.	
H But you don't say specifically when planning lessons in might be useful to look at?	
Head No, but we should, shouldn't we? Would be good because they can think about things..Might be useful.	
H Do you consider these criteria (the whole thing here) are identifying the best practice in teaching? Is there anything that is missing from the criteria that you think as an educator of some years?	Best practice?
Head We have come away from concept of awe and wonder and the specialness of what outstanding lessons used to be. The days when you came out and knew it was outstanding because you really enjoyed it and there was something really special about the lesson. That is not captured nowadays.	Loss of 'awe and wonder'..changing focus of observations/ what is outstanding
H Do you think that matters?	
Head Yes because that is what hooks children in. All the things that really grab their attention and makes them think I do like being in school and I do want to... learn...and I am really interested in this thing and I am going to listen really carefully now .. The thing that made lessons really super is kind of a little bit lost nowadays. I think that's sad. All the really good IPC bits that people do. Perhaps that kind of..what in the old days would have been seen as an outstanding lesson- not necessarily that they made 4 sub levels of progress in one day... is possibly a bit lost. But that doesn't seem to be recognised by this particular Ofsted regime's as being the wonderfulness of education. It's not just about learning, it is about learning to love learning. Isn't it? Being inspired.	Focus now on progress and data not awe and wonder. Learning to love learning Being inspired.
H You are saying the latest Ofsted framework for teaching is more about data and progress, rather than learning for its own sake, learning to love learning? Is that what you are saying?	
Head Yes. Back in the day, when we were allowed to have a bit more fun. There was a lot more need to engage the children and really have something inspiring going on. So you'd be thinking of something really interesting that	Had more fun in past. Creativity is stifled

you could do to get them to understand. I think that is not so expected nowadays. It says 'plan lessons that enable them to learn exceptionally well...' that doesn't mean that it's..inspirational or	
H It says somewhere about 'enjoying' or the word enjoy was there. That is an interesting one ...	
Head You get those teachers who are totally inspiring. You think- I could spend all day in here. I have got a couple who are quite- what they do is very different to what others do and.. They do tend to get outstanding lessons when judged externally, or good in lessons, but it's..not necessarily captured.	
H Is it not there now?	
Head There was a statement about awe and wonder and we were all searching for what that would look like. Ha ha- we don't need it any more. We have moved on to progress (laughs)	Progress now dominates
H Turn to the criteria. Are you aware of any political/ government policy that has impacted on what inspectors are expected to look for?	
Head I assume nowadays that from all sorts of global PISA judgements and everything that really the whole mission is to raise attainment to be in line with other European and international countries. That is why there is such an emphasis on raising attainment. Which is justified obviously in some respects, but there are some countries doing very well that aren't entrepreneurial or there is more to being a human being and being effective than being academic. All the social skills and all the richer parts of education kind of feel a little lost at the moment.	Impact of PISA Richer parts of education are lost
H Do you feel that is reflected in the way that inspectors judge teaching?	
Head Yeah. I think most heads would feel that the process is much more about attainment and that if they haven't got good attainment in their schools it is more worrying than if teaching isn't inspirational and exciting and the children really love learning. Much more obsessed with that the data showed that children were above national average. It is a shame really because especially the little ones want to get hooked in and love learning. Perhaps want a book...	Teaching now about attainment and data. Shame
H You see that as a political influence...Is it more recent? Has it been over all the years you have been a head or teacher?	
Head Yeah- I suppose the change is really since I have been a head. Even when I was at the beginning of H, it wasn't so much data led although obviously we had to	Changes evident in past 3 years- all

raise attainment. The attainment didn't feel such a big problem. It was more about the quality of teaching and learning. Now it is very much about 2 levels of progress, making sure you're above national average, worrying about free school meals. So much has been added to the pot in terms of everyone has to be at this level. It does seem to have taken away the emphasis on teaching, I suppose. As long as they are making the progress, it is all right.	about progress. No longer emphasis on teaching.
H Have you passed that emphasis onto your staff?	
Head Well, probably a little bit but I would hope that they still know that I would rather they were running around the field and doing something exciting with the children to make them learn. We are trying to look at ways in Year 1 to have a good outdoor area and think of Year 1 as a more holistic approach. Not just sitting down at tables, which is not going to work for many of our children who..are not ready for that. So we are going to try to balance attainment with what we believe in in terms of pedagogy and the way children learn. It does feel slightly like you are sort of at this...kind of.. I suppose it has always been that way, that especially in Year 1 and R that you almost have to guess what somebody wants you to be doing because people have different ideas when they come in. Trying to do everything to please everybody isn't it?	Heads dilemma- try to balance beliefs with focus on data. Trying to please everybody
H Including Ofsted?	
Head Yeah...even some Ofsted inspectors you know will have a different approach to early years than others. So we have to stand our ground and say this is what we believe.. Seems to have lost a bit of guidance lately. Certainly in terms of assessment. It is bizarre at the moment. We used to have nine point scale. It was very easy. You kind of knew where you were at. If they were 1 to 3 you didn't have to worry about them. If they were 9 you were doing really well but you would have to push them in Key Stage 1.	Early years problems
H Do you think inspectors know enough about it?	
Head I don't know enough about it? I have seen hardly any training available and when we had training, -we bought in someone from early education, and even she didn't really seem to understand it properly? I don't think anybody gets it. It is like Numicon! [laughs].	EYFS uncertainty
H Can you think of any other political influence on what inspectors look for in lessons particularly, over time?	
Head Seems quite recently that there is an obsession with progress in lessons. I don't know whether this is a perceived thing from heads or whether inspectors really are looking for progress in lessons. Talking to other headteachers there seems to be this obsession with	Recent changes Obsession with progress in lessons

demonstrating progress in lessons all the time, even in very short periods of time.	
H Do you think that is realistic?	
Head Sometimes, but often it depends on the lesson and the part of the lesson you are in. so that becomes very difficult. We have been having conversations about adapting the lesson when someone walks in so you can demonstrate progress by.. sort of feeding children the questioning to be able to ..manipulate that. All feels a little bit like a game.	Performativity Adapt lessons for observers
H Do you think that these criteria are a good thing?	
Head It is necessary to know what they want- like success criteria for children- you need to be hopefully as near to what they are looking for. I am not sure that necessarily a teacher could read that and know what that means and that's why we need to get out to some schools and see lessons that are recently judged... so we can visualise what that looks like. It would be really helpful if it came with some nice lessons that came alongside it and a dvd for you to see. That would be very helpful.	Performativity Need for more guidance as to what is 'good' as judged by Ofsted.
H We will talk about that afterwards.	
Head Have you got one?	
H No	
Head laughs..	
H Do you think it is useful to have the grade descriptors that we have now. We didn't have them before 2005.	
Head I think that is really important because you've got to –what is difficult is that you haven't got something for requires improvement. So if you have been told you RI you are not really sure which bits are good you got and which. That is a bit—leaves you feeling a bit loose when trying to give requires improvement ..can give bits of good and then they are not sure why they are not good if you have been able to give elements of good.	Grades- important. Gap as none for RI
H It's a gap- just says 'it is not good.'	
Head That is not terribly helpful when you want to be able to say- you did it at this bar, in order to get better you need to.... It doesn't give you that option of the tipping point terribly easily. That is what you really want to give teachers.	No descriptor for RI- not very helpful
H So the criteria have limited use, but you are saying that the fact there is no description for RI is not very helpful?	

Head	Particularly when the teacher's inadequate then you want them to move into RI, they've got nothing to...raise the bar to, because it is just negatives- you are not doing that.	Use of grades
H	Do you make use of criteria numbers/ words in your school?	
Head	I would think when people are writing up lesson observations they probably do use phrases directly from ...as a sentence starter if they are a little lost in knowing what to write, it is sometimes helpful to refer back to the.....	Use of grades
H	Do they share the numbers (grades) with teachers?	
Head	Yes.	
H	If you could make any changes to any part of this guidance that Ofsted is giving, what would you suggest?	
Head	I guess what would be really helpful in terms of not necessarily using it for inspectors, but for schools— would be to have examples of what that might look like because I think that's where we're at as a school. People for a long time got good lessons and had a couple of RI lessons are kind of sitting there thinking.. what is it that I need to do and if this high quality marking and constructive feedback ...what would that look like..If there was handbook that unpicked that with examples of really good practice. You know in the days when we used to get boxes with all sorts of lovely things. If you've got something that really unpicked each bullet point, it would be so useful for teachers. It would give them that visual. What we are hopefully looking for next week...finding some examples that are good, we can find out..then we can say to teachers, this is what good looks like so we can raise the bar for teachers..how they can do even better, so if yours isn't that good. Without that...	Need for more guidance and examples
H	They used to have that in the old days for primary schools. One of the handbooks which gave guidance- inspecting subjects 3 to 11. Do you remember that? It was green.	
Head	Oh yes. Back in the day..could use that for professional development, in staff meetings. I do feel that sorry for teachers as they are a little bit lost as to quite what people want..	Use for CPD
H	Anything else you would change? Or added? You mentioned awe and wonder? Anything that shouldn't be there?	
Head	I guess we want more description in terms of RI.	RI needs description

H	Summarises---	
Head	And there are some loose phrases..'reading, writing, maths and communication are taught effectively'..	More clarity needed in the guidance
H	What are you saying there then?	
Head	Doesn't really tell you what that means.	
H	Head do you think that having criteria undermines your professionalism and autonomy as a headteacher?	
Head	Yes, because we feel we have to meet what Ofsted is looking for, yet we have quite a strong idea of what we want teaching and learning to look and then we have to reflect back and think- is that going to be OK? Is that going to impinge on people if we want children to run round the field all day. Obviously that is not what we are looking for. You do have to go back to the Ofsted.	Ofsted dominance
H	You perhaps do things differently that you would do as a professional knowing what you think is best for children?	
Head	I think we give teachers a lot less freedom than we would if we weren't tightly tied to Ofsted. Even those materials that SFA have brought out, everything is related back to Ofsted statements. That is very clever for me. There is an Ofsted statement for ever. Somehow useful but somehow constraining. They have to tighten up what they are doing..	Constraining what teachers do-undermining professionalism? Performativity
H	When did you start teaching?	
Head	1993.	
H	That is when the first Ofsted inspections started of secondary schools. Primary started a year later.	
Head	There was a new national curriculum.	Post-performative teacher
H	So you have grown up with it..have taught with it?	
Head	My first Ofsted would have been 1995.. the Ofsted inspector came in and said 'you should leave this school'..laughs	
H	Really? The school, not because of you?	
Head	The school, yes!	
H	Is there anything else we haven't spoken about?	
Head	I suppose the one thing I would think from the Ofsted we had (in June 2013) is.. I do think that inspectors still use their professional judgement rather than being terribly tied to the descriptors. So when I was doing joint observations with an inspector I didn't feel that in lessons	Positive view of inspectors and their professionalism. Fair process and

where, perhaps the lesson was a bit borderline on one judgement, he did go with his gut instinct more than ..you have a feeling don't you. Ofsted inspectors are very professional and generally been doing it for a very long time. He certainly didn't sit there with a piece of paper and tick things off. So I think although they're very tight I do think that if an inspector is in a lesson that didn't have every single element, you get a fair judgement- we certainly did. I didn't question any of the judgements really. There was a couple that other people questioned that they were in the lesson of, but I didn't do paired observations with that inspector so I wouldn't be able to...	judgements
H With a different inspector, other members of your staff felt..?	
Head Yeah- they were being observed and you never think....	
H You have no other evidence to support their view?	
Head I felt the process was very fair rather than being driven by criteria. There is that you know when children are learning and are excited and being engaged.	Fair process Not driven by criteria
H So they are relying on their professional judgement and experience to give them that knowledge/ wisdom?	
Head When a new one comes out I don't think it changes their levelling even though the words have changed.	
H When you were present in the meetings (with inspectors) ...you were able to observe and hear those discussions. Did you hear them discussing teaching?	
Head Yeah..they didn't go through in huge detail. The lead inspector did ask other inspectors to justify their grading. Where perhaps RI was given, he would say 'why did you think that?' They did have those discussions in front of me. Not making any accusations, but in terms of him being able to write the report at the end and unpick what we need to work on. They were having that sort of dialogue with me.	Headteacher observations of the inspection discussions
H Did they go through the grades and say 'it looks like it is coming out RI for teaching because...? Did they have that discussion?	
Head Umm..yes. Particularly about different parts of the school. Where a few different inspectors had been into early years they would confer and say, did you see good lessons or.. and they had a dialogue about what they felt was good about that part of the school. About early years and key stage 1, they were having dialogue about the strengths that they all saw. That was useful for me to see	Fair process Consistency across the team

that there was consistency in their judgements.	
H But in Key Stage 2?	
Head Laughs... Also consistency about key stage 2 not being so good. The inspector did specifically send in other inspectors to validate the judgements other people had made – even the judgements we made. When there was one teacher who was very weak he sent another inspector in to make sure that she agreed. I felt that was very fair. I couldn't argue. In some instances I felt they were quite generous. Laughs	
H Was it consistent with your own evidence of the quality of teaching?	
Head Yes on the whole. There were a couple of teachers who didn't perform through the pressure of Ofsted, but on the whole the judgements were pretty sound compared to ours. We agreed.	Performance/ performativity
H (Your inspection) was quite recent- only in June (2013)-six months ago. Useful to hear of your experience of being in a meeting where there was a discussion (about teaching). Did you feel you needed to talk or just listen?	
Head Sometimes the lead inspector did ask, 'do you agree' and bring me into the conversation? He would keep asking my opinion of things. I think he was trying to make sure that I was part of. He wanted me to be very clear about why (it was going to be RI) . It was just. By the end we agreed with what they were saying. We felt it was fair. The other thing- for early years it (the handbook) doesn't give you an awful a lot of help. This is very much key stage 2, upper key stage 1 focused. This doesn't make it quite difficult when you are trying to do observations in early years. Early years feels like nobody cares.	Involvement of head during an inspection Fair process EYFS concern
H There is subsidiary guidance that refers to early years.	
Anything else?	
Head No	
H Thank you very much. So useful.	

SUMMARY

- The context of the school

The experience of the head and time since the last inspection are all factors that may have a bearing on how the head responds to the questions.

This head has only been in post for three years, one of which was acting in a school just out of special measures.

Her school was recently inspected in June 2013, judged to RI with good leadership and management. The school has around 26% FSM (close to the NA) and relatively low but increasing % of minority ethnic groups.

- Using the criteria

The head uses the criteria as a management tool, to guide the SEF, school development plan and to plan CPD.

Other staff use when observing lessons (as part of management)

- Use the grade descriptors to grade lessons

Is aware that not meant for individual lessons

- Recent changes

She thinks that have taken the fun of teaching.

Focus is now on attainment and progress even in lessons

- Government influence

She referred to the need to score more highly in international tests such as PISA

- Performativity

This was very evident- need to perform when observed/ adapting lessons to suit an observation/ teachers 'not performing well'

- Inspection process

Head thinks that the inspection process was fair and that she was included in discussions

- Improve the criteria

Need for clearer guidance- for example for RI and for early years

- Professionalism and autonomy

She feels that autonomy has been undermined because of the need to focus on data and progress (question answered indirectly)

rather than inspirational creative teaching- bemoans the loss of this.

- Reflexivity and positionality

I was conscious of my own position as an education consultant and inspector and that this may have influenced what the head said. She may have been giving answers that she felt I wanted to hear. She may not have wanted to 'lose face' in front of me. One of her answers indicated that she was conscious that she was not fully aware of the latest Ofsted criteria (as a new one had just been published).

As a result of this pilot I amended some of the questions. I explained some recent Ofsted changes when the interview had finished and sent the draft text to the head and the relevant chapter.

Appendix 13 Transcript of interview with two primary teachers

Transcript of interview with teachers from the same school
H. Thank you for your time. I do appreciate this. And the first question really is do you have any questions about the research?
T1 Well what's the outcome – what do you want to get from this? What will happen next?
H. That is a very good question, obviously I have to do a thesis which has to be submitted by next year, so I've got a deadline. So the outcomes really will hopefully inform Ofsted. I've already had a conversation with somebody there and hopefully they will be interested in what I found and it will inform them, but I'm not going into it with a hypothesis, it's very much grounded theory, they call it. So yes and just picking up on what people are saying.
T1. How long have you been doing it already?
H. Three years, it's quite hard work.
T1. I know a friend has just done a PHD and she's been doing it for five years. Yes, it's just taken over her life, but she's done it now so she's ..
H. It's quite hard if you're working as well, I think it's difficult, anyway the end is in sight, so this is the most interesting part doing the interviews. So just in terms of the context how long have you each been teaching?
T1. I'm in my second year, I was an NQT last year. I like it I feel like I've been teaching for about 20 years.
H. Really!
T1. This is my second year in Year 4, so next year I'm going up to Year 5. I'm in Year 4 at the moment and I do really enjoy it, a new challenge.
H. And how did you come into teaching?
T1. I did a PGCE. Yes, so I did a three-year degree before, had a year out, I was always interested in teaching, I was a swimming teacher and I thought I really want to work with children, so I just went into that and got on the PGCE course.
H. Which one was that Brunel?
A. No it was Hertfordshire, Hatfield.
H. Are you a co-ordinator?
T1. Yes, for history and geography.
H. So you are already a co-ordinator?
T1. Well, its shadow, I work alongside somebody, but we kind of just share it anyway, but that's been really good.
T2. And me, four years teaching, 1 year in Year 1 and 3 years in Year 2, next year back to Year 1. science coordinator with another girl, called XX, been doing that for 2 years and prior to that I was the art coordinator, did PGCE, here I am.
H. You were science coordinator and that was Brunel and you are teaching Year 2.
T2. Yes, Year 2, but you are going back to Year 1.
H Well okay, thank you very much for that so Ofsted, we're talking about Ofsted and the criteria for judging the quality of teaching and what I like to do just so that you know what I'm talking about, I will show you the latest version and I'll ask the questions. So this is whole of the guidance so how familiar are you with that?
T1. Yes, well quite familiar actually.
T2. We've had a lot of staff meetings on it.
T1. Obviously we were Ofsteded last year and so we all went through that, tough, but it was an experience definitely, but I know that through the years, it's changed, the criteria have gotten much tighter now.
T2. And the wording as well, lots of wording has changed.
H. In what ways would you say it's got tighter?
T1. So I think before from what would be judged as a good, what you now score a good lesson, now just wouldn't be judged as that and what before would be outstanding, would now just be good and I think only good is good enough. That's a tough thing now there's no satisfactory, it's obviously requires improvement so that you get your good or your outstanding or it's not good enough. This is awful wording I mean satisfactory was bad enough, but...
T2. To know that you're not even satisfactory is even worse, it's quite a big drop, quite a big gap I think between that to be good and requires improvement.

H. Quite a big gap.
T1. Yes, I think that's what we've seen, haven't we?
T1. Yes, obviously with the new curriculum we're trying to implement that at the moment and that's been quite hard, especially with us.
H. Did you think there were changes as well, even in the short time you've been?.
T2. Same as L, everything has upped its game, so the level, the perimeters have changed.
T2. I went on a course last year about being a good teacher to an outstanding and they were highlighting again sort of how it's moved up, wordings have changed with more assessment for learning and higher expectations and we expect more from the children, even though my 6 year olds are expected to be able to write reams and all the VCOT and connected papers and the ...
T2. For us its very progress heavy now isn't it?
T1. Very progress.... attainment it's all about their attainment and the points they make for apex schools.
T1. Sustained and rapid progress I think it says that's what we always get told.
T2. It's very hard for children who don't necessarily have SEN, but who have things going on at home that at the moment they might not be making that rapid progress.
T1. Yes, it's all about the children.
H. Yes, okay
T1. Sorry, that's what we've noticed that's a push on from my observations and things like that. That's what's stopping me from getting that outstanding was the progress on the children, from all the children, it had to be all of them, not just a group so that's what I found most difficult in sort of moving me up to the next level.
H. Are you talking now about being monitored in school?
T1. In school, yes, when we were observed it was the same I think, but as I was an NQT, I didn't get, I didn't think I was as harshly observed as everybody else. But that's what they said it had to be all of the children making rapid progress, so that's the big push now.
T2. Very difficult, I don't want to say it's unachievable, but it's not, I've had an outstanding but it's very, very hard and I can't guarantee that every lesson you will see will not be that.
T1. It's just unachievable I think to be able to teach like that all of the time.
H. But do you think there's an expectation that you should be doing that?
T2. With Ofsted they have the expectation, but the school are very much, they are aware that's there's only so much you can do, but I do think that Ofsted think you should be all the time.
H. So you think it's unrealistic then, their expectations?
T2. I think they're definitely wrong. I think every day you can have an outstanding lesson like today in my maths, it was brilliant, their enthusiasm, they progressed so much it was amazing. Yesterday they weren't with it, they weren't really grasping it as well.
T1. Yes, and you might get observed on a day when it's not and the next day it might be that so it's quite hard and it's quite subjective as well.
H. So do you want to say a little bit more about that, you think it's subjective?
T1. Yes, I think that from one person .. from the experience I had last year I know that some inspectors came in and because they don't know the children they maybe didn't think that maybe that was good progress, but we know that actually that is really good for those children. I think things like that are hard when you're coming in cold and don't know the school, or the teacher. That's difficult. I think it's easier for the school's observations because people might know the children.
T2. When you get the same observer, or one of them is the same they can see your progress, whereas with Ofsted it's just a 40 minute in your lesson, out, right then you're left with hang on a minute, you left when I wanted to do my plenary, or you've missed this aspect, you've come in after.
T1. You're kind of doing what they want to see where you wouldn't normally do that in the flow of a lesson, is what I sometimes I find.
T2. The pressure is on basically, obviously any observation has pressure, but with them it's really does.
H. It sounds it, but you mentioned L what they want to see?

T1. Yes, I sometimes feel that they have a criteria set out in front of them.
H. And it's not the same as this?
T1. Well one of them, I can't remember what I was observed on, but it was definitely boxes they had to tick, it was different things, I know when we are observed in school we have a different kind of format, don't we?
T2. They highlight what's good or outstanding.
T1. It's all worded like this, but it's set out in different boxes. I think you have to show everything. I remember reading the criteria and thinking I've got to do that, I've got to show them that and if they are only in for half an hour you've got to be sure that I'm always coming back and things like that and that's what I find hard when you would do it naturally anyway.
H. But it sounds as if you had to change what you would do though when you are observed?
T2. Well, you up the game, as we say, you jazz it up a bit more, you want to show your best as well. So you want to show everything you can do, but sometimes it can be a little too much.
T2. Yes, I find that if I'm under so much pressure I might forget something, or not do something I might do naturally because I think oh no they want to see this, I've got to do this.
T1. I don't know what they can do because everyone going to, I would be definitely worried if I knew that Ofsted were coming in to observe me and I know they've changed it, they used to give a lot of notice didn't they, before you used to get 10 weeks before, then it was a week's notice and ..
T2. Just a couple of days
T1. Now it's just a couple of days before and I think that's better.
H. You think that's better?
T1. Yes, I do because you get a true feel of what the school is like and I know that obviously we all here try to do our best every time that we teach every lesson, we try and plan to the best, but obviously you can't I think for an observed lesson you're being observed by Ofsted you would think it through to the max and I think you can't do that on a general day to day teaching, could you?
T2. No, not as natural.
H. Well that's an interesting one, not as natural.
T2. Well in class today it was just natural I was going with the flow, giving them challenge, but with Ofsted you do feel under that pressure. Thinking well I could take this here, I could take it there, but actually they know I'm looking at this lesson. Obviously you do change if a child is not grasping everything, stop, right guys that's not quite got that, let's go over it. That's part of our assessment for learning, but in the back of your mind you'll feel a bit like, oh gosh does that mean that they haven't made progress. Again it's ticking those boxes, so it's just not a very pleasant experience.
H. But it sounds as if in- school monitoring is different?
T1. It's different to that, they'll come in with smiles on their faces, they praise you and it's much more at ease, they talk to the children and the children are happy as well you can see, oh that's Mrs B she's always around the school, whereas they know when there's someone new in the school, they're curious and on edge as well.
T2. Definitely.
H. Interesting, so it actually affects the children.
T2. They're observant, the children.
H. Yes, they are, that's true. Can I just ask you given that you're not long out of your PCGE training whether you were prepared for this during your PCGE years? Did they go over Ofsted criteria at all?
T1. They did. I think because I did a PGCE, I don't know if you would agree with this H, but I feel it was just one year and it's such a crash course in everything and they do expect a lot of you, so on my second placement they expect you to be able to teach a lesson, I mean I didn't get any help and I just had to Just had to plan it and she would have the Ofsted criteria next to her when she was grading my lesson. Yes, she did do that, but it was horrible at the time, but actually it did help me because it made me really aware of everything I knew made good, or outstanding lesson. So actually it did help.
H. It did help?

T1. Yes I think the best experience you have is just on the job learning. The more experience you have the more you know what works and I think obviously having an Ofsted it did tell me this is what you need to do, this is what needs to be in lesson, but I do worry about that box ticking, it's not as natural as you said.
H. H you said you had a different experience.
T2. No, well it was about 4 years ago, but I think we looked at Ofsted maybe more in lessons, to say maybe these are the people who regulate the schools. These are the criteria and obviously the criteria were not as tough shall we say, but it was not our main focus, then it was just a snapshot of here are 3 PE lessons for the whole year and this is how you teach PE, very much like that so like L says the placements were the best because I had Ofsted on my first placement and that was my first experience in my first week. That was my first experience.
H. Did they observe you?
T2. They did, but because you know I was a student learning it was okay. That first time I didn't feel so much pressure, it was oh who are all these people in school, I've only been doing it for a week.
H. Okay thank you very much for that. So we talked really about the criteria and some changes. Are you aware of any political with a small p or government policy influences?
T2. We were talking about this yesterday, would you let Michael Gove, that was kind of ...
T1. Even if he's not a well-liked man amongst teachers, I don't think.
T1. And just things like going back to things like the old fashioned way of teaching.
T1. Yes, sort of drumming in facts and going away from skills isn't it, more...
H. And do you think that's going to have an impact on Ofsted inspections?
T1. Yes, I think it will, teachers will have to teach in a certain way to adapt to what they are looking for, but I think that a lot of teachers will teach how they think and I think, I don't know, what I'm scared of is I know in my first year I was right get the lessons planned, I just did what I needed to do. My second year what I'm worried of are the children are I know from above we need the data, we need the data. The children are seen as numbers and they are grouped all of the time and that's because of Ofsted. Ofsted wants to see are your pupil premium making progress. If they are not we are going to come and look and I don't see the children like that, so that's why it's hard and I write now these children can come to homework club now, but I've got this child who can benefit from homework club, oh no he can't because he's not pupil premium, but that's then from above, that's not from the school, that's from above, that's what I find hard in dealing with them as numbers and not as children.
H. And what you're suggesting is a sort of political initiative?
T2. I think because it all comes from above. Any policy is going to influence the criteria, what we can do, what Ofsted is going to mark us, assess us on.
T1. Because at the end of the day that's what their parents look at, don't they? They look at right what Ofsted did they get?
T2. Yes, how did they do in Ofsted, was it an outstanding school.
T1. So the school is under pressure to abide by what they are saying to do and then ..
T2. And then we're under pressure to achieve it.
H. You're still enjoying teaching though?
T2. I love my job, but I do find that every year I've been at school not because of Miss B but because of the powers that be above have put pressure on her, who in order, we've got to do this, pressure on us and every year it's upped the game and every year I've got to do more data, more marking, more next steps, which is absolutely fine whereas before it was quite verbal with a child or you just do it but now I need evidence in the book so that if Ofsted come in they can see how you've moved them on whereas before it was more of a just a chat or just a try this, you know.
T1. It all needs to be evidence now which is quite hard.
T2. But when we're with a child with the I-pad ...
H. So do you think you spend more time doing this marking?
T2. Assessments, jottings, jottings...
T1. Obviously I know that teachers have to do work in their own time. I spend a

lot of my own time marking.
T2. There isn't enough time, hours in the day at school.
T1. No and I think that's where the children are going to make progress through my marking, through giving them next steps, so that's what we have to do, yes. And it is hard. But I really enjoy it, I do, I really, really like it and I love year 4.
T2. And they were my babies.
H. Okay so we've talked about that, do you think having those criteria are useful?
T2. To a degree because you know where you've got to go, say you're at a good, I know how to get to be outstanding, works either way I think you do need criteria otherwise people are so different at least we are following the same. To be consistent across means that hopefully the teaching of children is consistent and it's assessing and all of that.
T1. Definitely.
H. Okay. Do you think they've got it right though? Does it reflect best practice?
T2. Again I think it's a little bit unrealistic personally ..
T1. I think it's quite hard and I think it's really difficult to achieve that outstanding.
A. All the time.
T1. Where does it say that? Rapid gain. Rapid and sustained progress. I think that is really hard to show to cater for all the children.
T2. And especially for those with everything including SEN
T2. If you've got a child with Jacobs Syndrome, his short term memory doesn't really work efficiently and you have to constantly repeat, repeat so it stays in his memory he's not going to make that rapid progress. He's going to make progress.
T1. Not very rapid, to him it might be rapid, but an Ofsted inspector is not going to know that. I know they have notes on children.
T2. I know there are some exceptions, they would accept that.
T1. I think it's very hard, but obviously we all aspire to be, to be good.
T2. Yes.
H. So you're not disagreeing with what's there?
T2. No, I definitely think the children need that and I think we need that to see where we want to go. I just think the expectation of doing this all the time, every lesson is too much and I would just like to say that the children with special educational needs it may be rapid progress, but it won't look like that if they come and observe it.
T1. Definitely.
H. And you said that the school has its own format?
T2. I've got one in my classroom, I have my observation form I can show you, do you want me to go and get that?
H. Yes, thank you.
T2. Be back in a second.
T1. I recognise the wording from it, it's sort of a sheet and it's got columns, in columns so they highlight what you've met, which is good because then you can see the progression, so I know if I got something in good I know where I need to go to get outstanding so I think that's good.
H. Are you observed a lot then?
T1. Well we do 2, one in the autumn term and one in the spring term and we do a different one where we like peer observe in the summer term.
H. Have you done that yet?
T1. I've done it today. Somebody watched me yesterday and I went and watched the reception class today, which was really an eye opener because I've never been in reception before, so it was really good to see that.
H. You went with somebody else?
T1. No, just me, yes we paid up and we (just talking about the peer observation)
T2. Yes.
T1. And then the reception teacher will come and observe me.
T1. Yes, and I think it was good for her because she hasn't really seen my year group so it was nice, yes.
H. So these observations are they all for performance management group?
T1. Yes.
H. So are other aspects looked at as well as lessons?
T1. Yes, we have book scrutiny and planning scrutiny. They are taken in twice a term, but they are only graded once a term.

H. And you don't mind Alison seeing that?
T2. No.
H. Ah well that's nice isn't it? Fantastic.
T2. But it's taken me 3,4 years though. First time outstanding.
H. But it does take time to develop as a ..
T2. But rapid progress it's a timeless experience.
T2. Because we've always had this, this is what I've wanted to achieve, so when I got that I was elated. Just incredible to think that I have worked hard, have achieved it but now my concern is to keep that up.
H. That's very true, to sustain it.
T2. But I suppose you need a little bit of that just to keep you going to keep you motivated.
H. So are these the progress measures?
T2. Yes. By the end of the summer term they should make 3.4, or 3.9 or something.
You can see they're on track.
H. So this is included in your PM?
T1. I think when the performance related pay came in SLT just wanted to be fair.
H. Difficult.
T2. Again 2's good, 1 is outstanding.
H. So that's going to affect your pay now?
T2. Yes.
H. So if you get .. how does that work then?
T2. As you can see on here they've taken Autumn, Summer...?...spring. They do Summer and then they work out an average.
T1. They work out an average for you. It comes from the progress of the children, your observations, your drop-ins, you get drop-ins as well, and your book scrutinies and your planning scrutinies.
T2. They take sort of an average, say you've got 2,2,1 you're classed as a good and I presume you go up the pay scale.
H. Pay scale, okay and they sort of use a 4 point scale for that, so if you got 4 what would happen?
T1. I think the school is really, really good at supporting.
T2.. They are very much, don't worry, we'll put things in place to help you achieve that, so.
T1. I don't think anyone's in that position, luckily. Yes we do have a lot of people that will help and support.
T2. Yes, members of the SLT and co-ordinators.
H. Well thank you very much for sharing that with me, that's really useful. So I've asked if you think there is anything you feel that's not in the criteria if you had to change it. I'll just ask again. Is there anything you'd want to change about the Ofsted criteria?
T2. With the criteria, obviously it's all about the quality of teaching, but it would be nice if they looked at what other things we do do, obviously being co-ordinator, but just things that I'm part of like FP.. Committee, where I organise summer fetes and quiz nights for the community. I do science club 2 times a year and just all those things would be nice to feel appreciated by Ofsted that I'm not just teaching I actually do a lot of other things to enhance the school.
T1. I think the quality of teaching is only just one 1 section, isn't it, when they come into to look.
T2. I don't know if you've ever sat with an Ofsted inspector and they say well what else do you do in school and how do you .. ? it would just to have been nice to say well maybe your lesson wasn't good, but actually you do so much, it's you know ..
H. Well this is a tough one, you've sort of answered in a way. Do you feel that having some Ofsted criteria undermine your professionalism and your autonomy as teachers?
T2. Well I just think it's too unrealistic ..
T1. I think that if you have a bad experience as well I think it could. I think everybody that's a teacher, I don't really know, I can just speak for everybody here. I know everybody here works really, really hard, so to come in and be told, right for working all those hours and doing all that you're not good enough is quite soul destroying really, but I mean if it's judged as that, it's judged as that, at the end of

the day it's black and white isn't it?
T2. Yes.
T1. If you have to be judged if you're teaching children you have to be judged on it so, but I see it could be really quite, well I'm going to leave the job now, I don't want to do that anymore then, if you've had a bad experience.
T2. If I'm honest, it wasn't a nice experience, I was on edge the whole time, it was not a pleasant experience. I think at one point when I was under observation I actually burst into tears at school. I was just like, why is.. I do my best every day, that's all I can do, that's what I've been told throughout from parents and maybe they think I'm not doing it. It really put me under stress and pressure.
H. And that was even before you were observed you felt like that?
T2. Yes.
T1. Oh yes. It was worse I felt, the thought of it was worse than actually doing it...
T1. Definitely, I remember sitting there and the year leader she looked at me and said, it's all right, don't worry, we'll help you, you're going to cry aren't you? I said no, I'll be fine. I was just really matter of fact about it I thought I can only do my best, that's all I can do and if it's not good enough, it's not good enough and luckily it was fine so ..
T2. Yes, exactly it was absolutely fine.
H. It all went back to smiles?
T1. Actually the inspector who was in my class was nice, he was really nice, he came in and he was with a member of SLT so that made it better and then when he spoke to me and gave me feedback he was really positive. Yes, he was really nice. I mean they spoke to us before and they all seemed like nice people. I'm sure they are they just have a very hard job.
H. To do yes, so it's ..
T2. Yes, well mine she was well she didn't really have any emotion on her face the whole time and I remember thinking well nothing drastically went wrong, I thought it was good and she came back and was much sort of calm and nice, keep it up you're doing a really good job and that's the main thing to make me feel much better, but I don't want to go through it again for a long while.
H. It sounds like a lot of stress, so in the end the school was judged to be good, wasn't it?
T1. Yes.
H. And how did you feel about that?
T2. I was a little bit sad. We had all worked incredibly hard and I kind of think Ofsted inspectors, were they teachers before?
T1. Don't know actually.
T2. Some might be. They should have a day in the life of and do what we do. Have to do all the jottings, all the assessing, just so they can really see. So it was a little bit sad for the school because I think ..
T1. I think because we went from outstanding to good as well, that was hard.
T2. But at the end of the day I'm pleased that we are good.
T1. I think that is really, really good on the scale because it's really hard to even get a good.
T2. It was the same with the criteria, what was good, you know, is now good enough now but outstanding is becoming good.
T1. So yes, I think we did really well and everyone, I don't think you could have said, like everyone was shattered, we came out and everyone was just relieved that it was over and everyone had worked so hard, but we had a lot of teachers out on school journey, that was really difficult actually and it was a bit of a mad .. that Tuesday night I remember was just not leaving school until late, just being so worried and..
T2. It was difficult, I remember it was my birthday and I was observed on my birthday as well. I think that was why I was so emotional and a week later my appendix decided to go, I'm not saying it was Ofsted that happened.
H. Did you have it out?
T2. Yes, but I just know I was so worked up and stressed because you just want to show them how good you are.
T2. And you don't want to let anyone else down.
T1. No, you don't want to let anyone down.
T1. We don't want to let Deb down because we know how hard she works and we

didn't want to let the other teachers down, because we're sort of team, aren't we?
T2. We're a team yes.
T2. I think we put a lot of pressure on ourselves too. When they actually came in it was a bit like Oh....
T1 Because we all do, we know that we do a good job anyway so we just have to do really what we do every day. That's easier said than done isn't it?
T1. Definitely the thought of it was worse than the actual event.
H. Well thank you, is there anything else you want to say?
T1. No.
T2. We're happy being teachers still, it's not obviously affected us that much. We understand we have to have criteria, otherwise how are you all going to be consistent and achieve and obviously at the end of the day it's all about the children and how much they can attain and great that you want them to achieve rapid progress, it's just sometimes not realistic, yes.
H. Okay well thank you.

Appendix 14 Transcript of interview with a former HMI

H. Good morning, thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this research. Can I ask when you joined HMI and when you left just to get a feel of when you were there?
S. I joined Ofsted as an HMI in September 2006, just as an ordinary HMI, if that makes sense. So my background was-- I came up through the education route, through the teacher route, through senior leadership. I then moved in 2001 into initial teacher training and worked at the University of Portsmouth where I was Associate Head of The School of Education, so basically had responsibility for all the teacher education that was going. But I wanted to go back into schools because my passion was teaching and learning and so went back as an HMI and then I think it must have been about 2010 when I worked with T, so together we worked on the framework for inspection which came in January 2012. Almost immediately that was introduced that corresponded to Michael Wiltshire starting [as HMCI] and then I was given the project lead for the changes that he wanted to make subsequent to the 2012 and that then came out in September 2012. I left in October 2012, just about the time that project had come to an end and there was quite a lot of reorganisation at that stage, and this job came up. So that's my history in Ofsted.
H. So that's very helpful, so you were leading in effect when two quite significant framework changes happened?
S. Yes, Ofsted would probably argue that there was one change and one tweak.
H. Yes, that's helpful, so can you say then that the January 2012 would be the major one you were involved in?
S. Yes
H. How were the criteria chosen?
S. Well I suppose the thinking was, the way it worked was there was a political driver not for the criteria but for the way the framework moved, as it was going to go from the 23 to the 29 judgements down to 4 judgements that made quite a big impact on your thinking because that was going to be just the one judgement on the quality of the teaching. There was quite a lot of discussion particularly about the links between achievement and the quality of teaching. We were working with the new Teachers' Standards that were being developed at the same time. The focus was very clear that it was on learning and progress, and we were looking at the Standards, what makes good teaching and were looking at the research. We did quite a bit of work with P S.
H. Ah, yes
S. PM was quite involved. We did something quite interesting, I'm sure you could talk to T about this. We did three very open pre-trial trials where we went to a couple of friendly schools where we actually went into the inspection without any criteria, which was quite interesting.
H. Yes
S. Yes, because it forces you down the line of actually identifying what it is that

contributes towards good learning. So it was a combination of needing the focus to be on learning, what contributes towards good learning, what does the research say, tied in with making sure we cross-referenced to the Teaching Standards. The key is, and I think one of the thing that retrospectively still blows me away, is that people still haven't quite got this, because right from the word go we were always clear and right up front that the judgements were on the quality of the impact of teaching on the learning across the school. It was never going to be about lessons, it was never ever about lessons, and I think we felt quite strongly that the previous framework had - there were a lot of good things about the previous framework and I don't want to be too critical about it- but it very much led teachers down the line of needing Ofsted's checklists- 'an outstanding Ofsted lesson is..., a good Ofsted lesson is...', and it's very hard to disengage the two and so for example we had to be very careful to and one of the jobs I did was the cross matching between the Teaching Standards and the criteria at all stages. And although one would expect there to be quite a lot of continuity and alignment, they are looking at different things and so I think that was absolutely key to our thinking that it was not about teachers or lessons, but it was the whole, but that is a very big challenge and people immediately from the pilots onwards wanted to unpick and I noted what was really interesting. We did our pre-pilots where we had nothing [*ie no criteria/ grades*]. This is a little anecdotal, but it's quite a powerful example really. One of the pre-pilots that we did in a comprehensive school in Cambridgeshire and we sort of took it in turns to drive this and say what we wanted and I said, right we are not even going to try [to grade], to put it out of our heads and we're just going to write down the things that were good about the lesson, the strengths, the things that could be better, nothing else just strengths, areas for development. I was feeding back in this way just the strengths, de, de, de and she said 'so what grade are you giving me?' and I said 'but we're not grading' and she said, 'but I want to know was that a good lesson, an outstanding lesson, what grade would you give me?' I said I'm telling you these are the things that contributed to learning and I think these are the things ...' and she said 'no, I want a grade, what is the point of you coming if you don't give a lesson grade?' I think it's a really important point and it's stuck with me, this poor girl shouting at me, poor girl. You know there were some really strong bits and it made me, it sort of makes me think it is somewhere and this is without an Ofsted hat on and probably with my current hat on is the impact that the Ofsted criteria on teaching had on the way that teachers perceive themselves and on performance management. And T and I were absolutely adamant that one of the guiding principles behind this was that we weren't going down that line. Between the two of us we ran around the country in the autumn doing talk after talk after talk and we made sure that we said the same thing. It's not about judging the teacher and I think we both hoped at the time that if nothing else, it also changed the way that schools did performance monitoring because it hasn't and I'm quite shocked and quite saddened that two years on when I'm working with heads, so many of them are still doing the two management performance observations that they can do a year and then averaging people and then adding them up.

H. It's very reassuring to hear you say that because it means that this research is worthwhile.

S. Yes, you know it's a tricky thing. I think that the previous framework and I obviously worked under the previous framework. Because I didn't start until 2006, I inspected under the 2005 framework, which was the big change, but interestingly that I think led people down that line of the criteria for lessons. So quite interesting.

H. I hadn't realised that you had carried out these pilot trials and that you did them without any criteria.

S. Yes, the first few pilots we did, honestly thinking back I can't remember what we called them. We didn't call them pre-pilots maybe early pilots. They made you fly by the seat of your pants. You know turning up to a school and you have three senior HMI with you. I mean it was quite scary because normally you were there with all your documentation and with your framework. For me it put the professionalism back into what we were doing.

H. That's what it used to be like back in the old days you know that's when I started and the criteria came in quite quickly.

S. I think, my view, I think we've drifted off some of those things, we're still on the

<p>same things, but I think the criteria – I've been thinking about it. One can understand where the criteria came from and that history of Ofsted if, you know, if you're going back pre- 2005 and sort of in those years where you had all the different inspection providers, 100s of them, there weren't quite hundreds, but there were lots of them and HMI didn't do the routine school work, they did – school improvement, international or you were in Teachers Training, all of those different groups and you did lots of monitoring, but I can understand how there would have been this want, this need, to bring consistency and how do you bring consistency. You bring consistency by having criteria by which people are actually pitching their judgements. I think if nothing else, history shows <u>that's a whole load of rubbish really because you still get inconsistency.</u></p>
<p>H. I know that's very interesting, I'll show you later on. I've got the very first one and it's interesting because you didn't ask and I'm not going to say what do we mean by the criteria, which part of the framework is the criteria, because in the early days it actually said 'criteria', but it doesn't say that now so this is – when I interviewed our teachers I gave them the whole thing [<i>shows guidance and grade criteria</i>]</p>
<p>S. Yes, what did they think?</p>
<p>H. So, it's interesting, I give them the whole thing [<i>including guidance etc</i>] and they thought it was just the grade descriptors .</p>
<p>S. Well I think I talk that I'm not actually, when I talk about it I would say it's both. It's that bit that comes first and then it's the grade descriptors, because this is saying what the inspectors need to consider, this is interpreting it into ...</p>
<p>H. You mean the grades?</p>
<p>S. Yes</p>
<p>H. And it's probably since 2012, it has this at the bottom [<i>pointing to the disclaimer that states that the criteria apply to teaching across the school and not individual lessons</i>], which is what you've just said.</p>
<p>S. Yes</p>
<p>H. About that holistic thing, it's about the one off...</p>
<p>S. Which - there's a few little bits, it's really interesting. It's funny when you look at it and I think I know that bit, I wrote that bit, it's quite funny and then you think, I think that in putting this together though it does evolve and I think if you looked at our first drafts following those, you know our forays into North of London into these schools, I think it's an interesting process putting together how you make judgements, how you, what do you mean by 'good', what do you not, and it isn't a about, that's important, it isn't just one person writing them, one person may start and then it goes through such a series of iterations and it gets sent outside, it gets looked at even down to the fact that particularly, I know Michael Wiltshire – the September 2012 ones -would want to share them with Ministers as well. There is political involvement there.</p>
<p>H. So it was shared with Ministers.</p>
<p>S. Yes, so it doesn't suddenly come out of the blue.</p>
<p>H. So that obviously is a question. Are you aware of any impact of that sharing with Ministers, any change in the criteria?</p>
<p>S. I think that probably of the four judgements the one that changed the least following any impact is that one. That's where the least political interference comes from and I think that that's because it is really about something that's outside their field, their understanding, whereas some of the things that did change or were tweaked because of, I should be careful how I say it, not necessarily because of political pressure but for political consideration were, for example, in the achievement section, the focus that's on early entry, for example, in secondary, so that's something that comes in because there's a political thought, but that's not necessarily where its wanting to go. Having said that, I do believe that Ofsted is independent pretty much and I don't think that Michael Wiltshire would have made any changes without actually believing in those. There was always quite a lot of talk about how it all linked together, you know is it possible, for example to have outstanding achievement without outstanding teaching and one of the key things and it's quite interesting. I'll have to think carefully how to say this. I don't want to come across – I think my view is that history will not remember the January 2012 [framework], those two terms, history will remember Michael Wiltshire and I think, for example, you know that Michael Wiltshire is really clear in saying, I'm sure if you asked him he would say he was</p>

one of the people who said that a school couldn't be outstanding if it didn't have outstanding teaching and interestingly that's not quite how it was because the framework changes made it almost impossible to not, and when we did the analysis of the first term and the first two terms of the framework you will see that there were no schools that were graded as outstanding that didn't have outstanding teaching, so some of the things that he consulted on – he came in – I don't want to be critical, I can see where he's coming from, but he was appointed in November not having been part of the development of a new framework, he had very fixed ideas and he talked about his fixed ideas and what he was going to do before he even started and so it was then quite difficult when some of the things he had been talking about has actually been changed. Does that make sense?
H. Because you had already changed them?
S. Yes, but he still wanted to consult on them, so I do think he wanted to make it his own and I can understand and appreciate that. It needed a big bang, but for me when you look at that framework, particularly for teaching, I don't think it's too dissimilar between <i>[Jan 2012 and September version]</i> .
H. No.
S. The big difference was really the decision was made and that was quite an interesting one, about not to have grade descriptors for requires improvement and that was quite a big debate.
H. And what was your view?
S. The thinking behind that was to draw away from this whole ticked box situation. It's easy to say when teaching is inadequate. Teaching is inadequate when it doesn't lead to learning all the time and that is really, really clear and it's relatively easy to say what good teaching over time is because of the impact, and it becomes harder to write something like 'requires improvement' because it either, it becomes a sort of, it either becomes so negative that it looks like it's inadequate and I've read plenty of reports that read like that, or it becomes the one in some but not others, if that makes sense, you know. So the decision was that 'requires improvement' --it was just not good, but it wasn't so inadequate that the whole thing – and I think that was the right thing.
H. That's really interesting, because just the one interview I've had with a couple of teachers, they felt that they wanted something for RI because of reasons suggested earlier because of structuring lessons, grading lessons.
S. Because if you want to write something it seems to me that teaching requires improvement when the kids are not learning as well as they should be and teaching is good when children and young people are learning well. In this framework [look at the document].
H. This one?
S. No the old one. This one here
H. You need to refer to that.
S. The two bits that were really interesting were I argued, I would have argued at one point, quite argued that you didn't need anything other than that first line because that first line 'teaching in most subjects is usually good with some outstanding ..as a result most pupils, or groups of de, de, de....., make good progress and achieve well over time. I don't think you would really need the rest personally, the rest – and actually it's generally a little bland after that. So 'they have high expectations' and 'they plan' and 'they listen to and observe'...there is nothing you would disagree with. That was a bit of a political one...homework...
H. Ah, ok, homework had been in some previous ones. It seems to have gone in and out..
S. I think those are the ones that haven't really changed. They are the ones we wrote. They were the sentences we wrote really early on.
H. So you mentioned, you talked about some of the political influences and obviously the change of HMCI was one big one, and the impact and you also mentioned earlier that you looked at research, so I don't know if you can recall education research?
S. Yes, we looked – when we were doing it we looked at some of the research that had been done, we looked at some of the research that – I mean the big influence of the McKinsey research, we worked quite a lot with people like XX who had obviously done a huge amount of research into good learning and also really it was a trawl into what were the recent research papers saying, you know, approaching it a bit like a research project, ..what is that is being identified as

making a difference. Which is where those things like high expectations, assessment for learning, for example you know came into play.
H. So that was carried out by individual HMI, trawling through?
S. Yes, so we would be looking at that, talking that through. We had various different working parties that would look at it, if that makes sense. There was work on various, you know. The other research that we spent – that we used quite a lot was Ofsted's own research and that's one of the powerful things about Ofsted is all the subjects and survey reports, for example the triennial reports were drawn on. What is it they're saying because that's really honing down on what makes good teaching, but it comes back to the fact that it's not about lessons, it's about teaching over time. It's very tricky.
H. That's a good one, I was going to say that the very first, its 1994, the first primary school inspections happened then and it says and this is interesting, it says 'teaching qualities should be judged by the' objectives within their lessons'. It's very clear that it is about lessons.
S. Absolutely
H. About lessons, so it's interesting.
S. It really is, so – and I think that it's quite interesting .. if things like sentence 'if teachers have clear objectives for their lessons', so this was in 1994 wasn't it which was coming in on the back of the National Curriculum, it's coming in on the early days of the National Strategy and things like you know the three part lessons and I come back to what I said that I am still shocked at the number of schools that still have, you know, tick box things and this is just again really anecdotal—I have a really close friend, she's been a friend since I was a child and she's a teacher and that's what she is, she's a biology teacher, I don't mean that to sound patronising, but you know 30 years on and she's still teaching actually she's still in the same school, which is quite interesting. Very stressed type of individual in many ways, but she really got her knickers in a twist the week she was having performance management observation and so you know I tried to sort of calm her down and I sent her a text that said 'oh how did it go?' and she goes 'well thank goodness I got a good', she said, 'I've got four outstanding and I got a good in one box, so therefore it's...' – so I said I'm not sure I understand that. She said, 'Well I've been given outstanding for this bit of it and outstanding for that and there was one part of it that wasn't outstanding so I didn't get an outstanding overall'. It's about learning over time and it isn't in her school, it's a secondary school and I think that has been where we have come – and I think Ofsted have contributed to that and I'm hopeful that Ofsted is now contributing to the dismantling of it, but I'm not sure that M W has quite taken on, you know when you build an edifice, and its huge, 23,000 schools, you can't quite knock it down with one little hammer, or one person saying it, it takes a great big ball and chain.
H. Very true, yes well I inspected a school, or I did a review in a school that was inspected before Christmas and they stated categorically that inspectors were grading lessons. Can't argue with that, so to get the consistency amongst the inspectors is going to take a while..
S. Absolutely
H. – It may take a while.
S. The challenge and there's a lot of challenge in training and interesting when I started training in 2006, so one of the things, some of the best training I ever had, but part of that training was to sit in a room with other colleagues and watch a DVD of a lesson and there is still some of that which goes on in the training now. If inspection isn't about making judgements on lessons, you know, how do you do it remotely? That's quite a, you know, you have to,it's quite an interesting one. I was also talking to someone who, talking to one of the – again anecdotal, this isn't really Ofsted, but I will feed this back to Ofsted at some point. We've been paying to put our consultants through Ofsted training, as we want our consultants to be Ofsted trained and then they had to go out and part of the training is you go into schools to do some lesson observations in schools, which is the right thing to do. But it was interesting that one of them was talking to me and he was sort of saying that he was going in next week and you know have you got tips about de, de, de and I was saying how I would do EFs and he was saying well how do you do it on your laptop and I said well I don't quite understand what you mean on your laptop and he said well the trainer says he does all his EFs directly onto a laptop and I said well how does he do that and yet he can walk around the

classroom and look at books, etc. and he says 'well I don't know, but maybe he doesn't' and the problem then is that it brings the focus back onto the teacher.
H. Yes that's true, that's a very interesting one.
S. I suppose the only, what is quite important and I think it's something for everybody, schools as well is that there are different purposes for lesson observations. Ofsted has a particular purpose for lesson observations. The purpose of Ofsted observations is to get a picture of what the strengths of teaching are and what it is that is impacting on those particular outcomes. So if the outcomes are good for the kids, what is it that leads to that, and if the outcomes are not good, what leads to that. Lesson observations should be very different for different purposes, so for example if you're working with a trainee teacher or a young teacher the way that you observe that lesson needs to be very different for a very different purpose, because you're observing the lesson and the record that you have is needed to really impact on that teacher's understanding of what they are doing to develop them, that's quite different, and I think it's all got a bit blurred, but hey, that's interesting.
H. Great, that's a very good point. Observation is for different purposes, and I think that's a problem with schools, that they just think that one size fits all.
S. And if that was clear you would then have less – people would stop being worried about observations. There's a bit of a climate of fear, I think. I remember when I first became a head of maths in an ordinary comprehensive, no more challenging than most, but had a very challenging, really, really challenging Year 10 class and was really struggling with the behaviour of some of the boys, it was two thirds boys and the girls weren't much better. I was really struggling with this group and so was a little panicked because in my previous job I would have talked to my head of department. I was the head of department now and in the end I just thought sod it and I asked the deputy head to come in and observe me because I needed some help. Now, I'm not sure, that was fine in 1997, but would people be inclined to lay themselves open because that could be seen as a weakness and that's tied in - partly Ofsted, partly the performance management. There's a feeling in schools that when they are observed in some way they are observed in a punitive and a measured way as opposed to a developmental and open way.
H. So that answers one of the questions.
S. Sorry.
H. No, that's brilliant- it's about the influence in school classrooms and I think you touched on that quite a number of times and in terms of what you have been saying and you've just mentioned now the climate of fear. Can I ask you what is your evidence for that? Is it when you've been into schools yourself more recently?
S. Yes, I think it's partly anecdotal, I think it's talking to people. I think it's not so much talking to heads it's talking to teachers that are more wound up, you know about their lessons observations. It's not universal because there are many, many schools where a head has created a climate of open door policy and heads that walk the whole time and people are used to it. It comes from the headteacher, but it is I suppose part of it is heads wanting – I do wonder whether part of it comes from when heads were expected to use the Ofsted framework to validate the school's self-evaluation and heads need to provide evidence to show that the teachings of this quality. To provide evidence they need to show grades, they needed to show they were judging by Ofsted standards so therefore had the Ofsted tick list. A bit of a vicious circle. And a question that I will e-mail because T and I are really good friends and I need to get him in a corner and ask him this question, because it's a question that is still now in my head with the new announcement that they [Ofsted] are looking at moving to a different framework and one visit every two years, but no lesson observations in that and again it's self-evaluation. Is there not a risk that this brings us back to the situation that we had before of heads wanting to have their tick lists and that
H. Been there.
S. – I don't think T will go down that line. It will be interesting, you know my question is what is different to the reduced tariff inspections, which I hating doing.
H. I know and we see the impact of that many years later. So do you want me to NOT mention I've spoken to you?
S. Oh no, you can tell him. yeah, ye. Tell him you got it all from S anyway!

H. Yes I will! [Laughs]
S. I'll e-mail him anyway. No, he's on my list I was going to e-mail him anyway. He's obviously not away next week, so.....
H. So, are you aware of any differences between primary and secondary teachers in the way they respond to or interpret the criteria?
S. No, I think it's more – for the last 18 months working in S has shown me that in terms of headteacherssecondary heads are probably more savvy and more on the ball when it comes to Ofsted and it might be just a local issue, more inconsistency in primary, but I don't think there's a huge difference. I think it's the same..
H. How did Ofsted help inspectors to use the criteria and apply judgements, that's the sort of training of inspectors that you have been involved in.
S. But I think, I mean the training of Ofsted did for HMI was always excellent and a real focus. The framework that T and I were involved with, we did, we led most of the training and there was quite a lot of quality assurance particularly, you know initially, all of the initial training by SERCO, Tribal CFBT, was led by them but there was an HMI there and I think there's a huge difficulty in training the workforce. There's a huge number of inspectors and you get people that, regardless of whether you train them or not,-- You're, supposed to train them, it's more about how they actually go out and do it. When you think about the sheer number of inspectors, I do think there's a quite a lot of inconsistency, a huge inconsistency in inspection teams.
H. Is that based on your own first-hand knowledge?
S. I think I would probably be, if you'd have asked me that 2 years ago when I was part of Ofsted I would have said 'Oh no, there isn't', but I have to say I think when you're leading inspections when you're in Ofsted as an HMI you are leading inspections and so you may have some team inspectors that are not as good as others, but because you're leading it you carry the can, you make the judgements, you pull your team whichever way you want it to go and I was always quite a control freak, and still am, so held my teams very tightly to account and I would think that I would say that I was consistent from inspections regardless of which team I had because I could control that. The thing that I've noticed in the last 18 months and since September 2012, there's been 200 inspections in Surrey, since then, a huge number. We've had 80 since last September, which is a huge number and I think the thing that has struck me has been the inconsistency of the teams and I am obviously looking at it from a different...
H. In terms of the report?
S. In terms of the quality of the report, what the headteachers are telling me. In terms, you know, we'll have schools that I would think, you know that's definitely an RI school, we've got them on our programme for RI schools we're working with them, Ofsted will give them a good. One school recently which absolutely inadequate, I can't believe it got an RI, you know, to the extent that I still sent the warning letter, basically I've written to Ofsted saying that I believe you've got it wrong which is why I'm now going to send a warning letter, so there you go. To the other way round, schools that we've had 2 outstanding and 2 inadequate judgements over-turned.. ..
H. Did you challenge them?
S. We've challenged them and as somebody said to me, they said 'what I don't get is how one inspector can make school X inadequate, when it's not and inspector Y has made another school RI, just look at it, it can't be more inadequate than it is, how does that work?'
H. Do you have your own theories as to why that happens?
S. I think the problem is, I think the system, it's breaking, it's breaking people almost. It's actually... very few people who are working for SERCO, TRIBAL or CFBT are full time. Most people are doing it you know and there's good reason they're doing it, maybe a couple of inspections a term, whatever. You've got headteachers, you've got people who've been around forever, not that there's anything wrong with that. People have their own different views and some people find it very hard to get out of that viewpoint and it goes back to what I said, I think, earlier, having really tight grade descriptions, in theory should have eliminated inconsistency, it didn't and a concern that I have is though I do think it is about the impact of teaching on learning. There's a lot of ways of interpreting that. I think Ofsted worry about it. I don't know, I get the impression from the things that I

read...
H. Well I think that at the moment we hear that they are checking every single report, following the guidance on writing about teaching, but apparently they are checking every single, so there's quite a lot of QA going on and reports are going back.
S. Well a leading inspector said to me, the other week actually, he was saying to me 'that the difficulty is with me, you're breaking a lifetime here' and he says 'the section on teaching and learning is reduced, because' he says, 'I'm finding it quite difficult to know what to write. If the impact of teaching on learning is good because the kids are making good progress, I can't write about teaching styles, I can't write about independent learning, I can't write about....., you know, it's all a bit samey'...
H. I think it has become that way, that's my view. So is there anything else? Although I think you've given me a good amount of time. Is there anything that you'd want to say?
S. I think inspection without lesson observation and being in the classroom is the wrong thing to do. Schools are about teaching. I disagree with the Policy Exchange, 'Watching the Watchman' that suggests a system where you don't do lessons. I think it's beholden to Ofsted, Ofsted has the remit, the only people to have that remit to go into schools, whether people like it or not, to look at what makes good practice and we have to learn from that. It's been so influential particularly the, you know, the subject reports, and I think that's really, really important. I do also think that we do need to be talking and continue to be talking about not making judgements on lessons but on teaching over time, but then not be afraid to identify what does look like good teaching. I worry we go too far the other way, you know, personally I think that if all kids are learning, I don't think it matters. We do know that there are things that help children to learn and I hope Ofsted won't be afraid to actually say you know, this is what makes the difference. But I do wish we didn't have Ofsted 'outstanding lessons' and people have tried to jump to the tune for too long.
H. So people have written books about it.
S. I know. I quite like the fact that they might be out of business...[Laughs]
S. I hope that was helpful.
H. That was extremely helpful, thanks ever so much. I really appreciate it.

Appendix 15 Example of part of the data analysis process

Research question	How do primary teachers from the teachers' schools view the Ofsted criteria and use them to influence their own classroom practice?		
Interview questions	Codes tagged to data linked to the question	Theme and link to <i>further literature review</i>	Link to Content section
How long have you been a teacher?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Context Experience Role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of the teacher Role in school Context of the school (<i>research into link between context and inspection outcome</i>) 	6.2 Background of the interviewees and their schools
<p>The Ofsted criteria for judging the quality of teaching have changed many times since the first primary inspections in 1994. Are you aware of changes to the criteria for teaching since you started teaching in....?</p> <p>In what ways have noticed that they have changed? (Supplementary - when were you last inspected?)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Own experience of being inspected Timing of inspection Most recent inspection outcome Knowledge of criteria Focus on pupils Raising bar Inconsistency Performativity Progress of pupils Myths National Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variation in experience of inspection and views Impact of the context of their school, when they were inspected and outcome (good etc.) Perceived changes to the criteria over the years (literature review section..) Less focus on performance and more on pupils Adapting pedagogy when observed (performativity) Has Ofsted raised the bar? (<i>further literature review</i>) Ofsted myths (<i>literature review</i>) Inconsistency of inspections/ inspectors 	<p>6.3 Views on their most recent Ofsted inspection</p> <p>6.4 Changes to the teaching criteria over the years</p> <p>6.4.1 Ofsted raising the bar?</p> <p>6.4.2 Focus on pupils</p> <p>6.4.3 What inspectors look for</p> <p>6.10 Consistency of inspections</p>

Are you aware of the political/ government policy influences on the criteria? Can you give examples?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on framework • Less time in school • Less focus on pastoral issues • Every Child Matters agenda • Topical issues: Performance related pay • New National Curriculum • Free schools and academies • Ofsted • Fear of academisation • Conspiracy theory? • Pupil premium • PISA • Raising the bar • Trojan horse affair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independence of Ofsted (from government) • <i>(further literature review – link between inspection and academisation)</i> • Importance of topical issues performance management and new National Curriculum • Raising the bar- literature review section • PISA outcomes – <i>(further literature review about PISA)</i> 	6.5 Perceived political influences
What other influences do you believe have affected the criteria? (for example, research) Views about the criteria?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaware of influence of research • Difficult to achieve • 'rapid and sustained' progress • Unclear • Unrealistic- 'leaps and jumps' • Impact of home • SEN pupils • Words- 'much and most' • Mainly right areas in criteria • Help to raise standards • Good thing • Stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has Ofsted improved teaching <i>(further literature review of annual reports, research findings and Ofsted data on teaching quality)</i> • How inspection affects teachers personally <i>(further literature review)</i> • Stress and resilience <i>(further lit review)</i> 	6.6 Other influences and views about the criteria 6.7 Personal factors
To what extent are the criteria useful to you as a teacher? Is it useful to have grade descriptors for the criteria? How do you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used for Ofsted/ not planning • SLT use criteria • Common expectations across schools • Need to know grades • 'Know where you are' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of the criteria • Schools use criteria in monitoring • Change in grading across the years 	6.13 Do we need Ofsted criteria? 6.9 Grading of lessons 6.13 Do we

make use of the grade descriptors?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No grading of lessons (<i>further lit review</i>) 	need Ofsted criteria?
Does your headteacher expect you to use the teaching criteria to plan lessons? Does your headteacher/ other senior teachers use the criteria when observing your lessons?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance management Not used for planning Used for Ofsted Accountability Constant monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performativity and Panopticon Accountability Post – performative and habitus 	6.8 How schools use the criteria 6.11 Performativity
Do you think that the criteria reflect best practice in teaching? What, if any, sorts of changes would you implement to the criteria?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main ideas are there Not reflecting school issues / reality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content of criteria and link to research into effective pedagogy (<i>further lit review</i>) Nature of the wording of the criteria 	6.13 Do we need Ofsted criteria?
Do you believe that Ofsted criteria for teaching undermine your professionalism and autonomy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need benchmark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence of years' teaching? 	6.12 Impact on professionalism and autonomy

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